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CANADA

JQ resumes SYD-KIX

JETSTAR has confirmed it will fly three times a week between Sydney and Osaka, Japan from 01 Apr next year - the first time the budget carrier has flown the route in 15 years.

Following a move by the airline to recommence flights between Brisbane and Osaka in Oct (TD 19 Jun), Jetstar said this week it will deploy its Boeing 787 Dreamliners to service flights to the Japanese foodie capital from Sydney when it launches next year.

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FCTG strong despite hurdles

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has announced a very strong start to the latest financial year, recording an impressive \$6 billion in Total Transaction Value (TTV) for the first quarter.

The result represented the second strongest beginning to the year for FCTG ever, behind only 2019, and also heralded a record volume of corporate TTV.

Speaking at the company's Annual General Meeting this morning, CEO Graham Turner said that despite the largely positive financial results, he still remained concerned about a lack of air capacity between Australia and Europe via the Middle East.

"One of the biggest impediments to recovery so far has been a lack of airline capacity and competition; the good news is that conditions are improving gradually which is expected to benefit travellers as the year progresses," he said, adding the business is fully supportive of carriers like Qatar Airways and Turkish Airlines expanding their reach into the Aussie market to



combat any shortfalls in seats.

Turner also pointed to Australian demographics less impacted by mortgage stress as key drivers of current demand, such as baby boomers fuelling the luxury segment, as well as "relatively widely-held view" that despite budget pressures caused by inflation, Aussies don't see travel spend as discretionary.

"Travel's resilience is further underlined by consistent year-on-year market growth pre-COVID, and downturns have been relatively rare, short-lived, and they have been followed by sharp rebounds," Turner said.

Further financial highlights presented at FCTG's AGM included a 70 basis point revenue margin improvement, a record-low 9.6% underlying cost margin, and a strong cash flow for investment.

Underlying EBITDA also improved by 265% year-on-year to \$301.6 million for the FY2023, and leisure profit rose back to pre-COVID levels. AB

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eleven pages of the latest news including a photo page from Flight Centre, a special update from Destination Canada and our Luxury feature page, plus full pages from:

- Entire Travel Group
- CLIA

Carnival 25/26 out

CARNIVAL Cruise Line this morning released its 2025/26 program of departures from Australia, including new itineraries to Fiji and New Zealand sailing out of Sydney aboard Carnival Splendor.

Cruising out of Brisbane, Carnival Luminosa will offer sailings to Fiji and PNG, while both vessels will also operate Great Barrier Reef cruises.

More of the latest cruise news in today's issue of Cruise Weekly.

CVFR pampers you

CVFR Consolidation Services has moved to ensure it delivers attendees at this Sat's NTIA awards the most pampered experience yet, sponsoring the night's Pure Chica Powder and Pamper Rooms.

The Pamper Rooms will have a team of hostesses on hand to deliver makeup touch-ups, lashes, hair styling, mini-manicures and neck massages, while the powder room will offer a range of luxurious bathroom amenities.

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JB chugs along new track in '25

EXCLUSIVE

JOURNEY Beyond has launched its 2025 collection of tours, train journeys, and Sal Salis stays, including an all-new Indian Pacific itinerary (**TD** breaking news).

The Indian Pacific is extending its eastbound itinerary to a five-day, four-night journey, featuring new off-train experiences and "enhancements that reimagine crossing the Nullarbor by train".

Set to operate year-round beginning Jan 2025, the extended itinerary will depart Perth, visiting Kalgoorlie, Cook, the Barossa Valley, Broken Hill and the Blue Mountains, with pax to disembark in Sydney.

During the rail journey, guests will enjoy a new signature dining experience at Seppeltsfield Barossa, with a menu curated by Executive Chef Owen Andrews and accompanied by local wines.

Journey Beyond will also introduce its new Gold Premium



offering on the Indian Pacific (**pictured**) in 2025 (**TD** 14 Aug).

The operator's 2025 season, now on sale, includes a new pairing of The Ghan with Outback Spirit's Arnhem Land Wilderness Adventure tour, called Arnhem Land Adventure.

Outback Spirit will also bring back its most popular itineraries, including the 13-day Arnhem Land Wilderness Adventure, a range of Kimberley Tours, Simply Kakadu, and two tours in the Pilbara and South West.

Offering guests availability across both humpback and whale shark seasons, Sal Salis Ningaloo Reef is now open for 2025 as well. *JM*

Princess unveils record cruise from Oz

THE longest-ever world cruise to roundtrip from Australia has been revealed by Princess Cruises for its upcoming 2025/26 program.

A 114-night voyage on *Crown Princess* (**pictured**) will offer return departures from Sydney, Brisbane and Auckland, and visit 48 destinations in 31 countries across six continents.

Two new world cruise ports have been added for 2025/26 as well, with Alexandria in Egypt and Patmos in Greece expected to resonate with Princess guests, while overnight visits to New York, Lima and Quebec have also been added to the schedule.

Further highlights include late-night stays in destinations such as Reykjavik in Iceland and Tahiti.



QF and VA not a factor: King

FEDERAL Transport Minister Catherine King has once again clouded her previous decision to block Qatar Airways from doubling capacity in Australia, this time claiming Qantas was not a factor in making the call.

Speaking at The Australian Financial Review Infrastructure Summit, King indicated she "clearly did not take the commercial interests of either QF or Virgin into consideration when I was making that decision".

The comments were in contrast to previous intimations from King, who when questioned at the time said there was a need to bolster the national carrier's recovery from the pandemic.

Reiterating comments made following a recent Senate Inquiry into the decision, King also confirmed the Federal Govt was receptive to Qatar applying for added capacity again.

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Lounge like a Lizard

LIZARD Island has announced two new luxury lifestyle packages, designed as add-ons to a stay.

The Adventure on Lizard Island package includes a guided Aqua Darts Snorkelling tour to explore Anchor and Watson bays, and the famous Clam Gardens.

The package retails from \$856 per couple.

Meanwhile, guests seeking a more relaxing and holistic getaway can opt for the Wellness on Lizard Island package, where they can make the most of the island's more meditative walks and its naturally beautiful places.

Available in conjunction with a three-night stay, rates for this package start at \$360 per couple.



75% of QF gripes unsolved

ONLY one in four complaints levelled against Qantas were resolved to the satisfaction of its customers last year, a new report published by The Airline Customer Advocate shows.

The damning statistic for Qantas in 2022 was exacerbated by workforce shortages and supply chain issues, the report noted, however rival airlines all managed to fare better with their customer base during the same period.

While still well below industry expectations, Virgin Australia resolved 30% of all customer complaints, and Rex delivered the best outcome for its passengers, well ahead with two-thirds of complaints resolved.

Perhaps most dishearteningly for Qantas was the fact its budget sister airline Jetstar performed far better when handling complaints.

The low-cost carrier successfully resolved just over half its customer complaints.

Another unflattering finding for Qantas was the lengthy time taken to finalise customer issues, which was on average 110 days.

The sluggish turnaround time trailed the field significantly, with VA only taking 15 days on average and Rex taking around 20 days.

Jetstar was the second worst offender, taking almost 40 days to finalise complaints.

Leading the list of complaints among Australian flyers were refunds requests (42%), with Qantas complained about more than any other Australian carrier.

The airline recorded a refund complaint 1.27 times for every 100,000 passengers carried, ahead of Virgin Australia (0.92), Rex (0.68) and Jetstar (0.64).

Second on the list of airline complaints in 2022 was flight delays/cancellations, making up 29% of all grievances, followed by poor baggage services (12%), fees and charges (4%). *AB*

European tix price hike slowing: IATA

ADDING some extra sting for Aussie travellers suffering with exorbitantly high airfares, new figures from IATA suggest the price of air tickets in Europe is rising slower than inflation.

A new report from the airline industry body noted that air transport is holding airfare inflation at 16%, four percentage points below the rises seen in the broader consumer price index on the continent.

The findings were rebuked by Council International (ACI) Europe however, which claimed ticket prices have in fact been rising much faster than European inflation, suggesting tickets have increased by 38% over the same period IATA referenced.

ACI used independent data from the RDC instead, adding that prices will likely continue rising and were up 47% in Oct when booked three months in advance.



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Bonza's Goldie opportunity

BONZA'S plan to make the Gold Coast a major base of operations formally took off today with the first direct flight between the tropical Queensland city and Townsville in the state's north.

The airline announced a major restructure of its flight operations in Aug (**TD 01 Aug**), a decision that saw 11 routes flagged for the Gold Coast in addition to a range of others axed from the network.

Over the next two months, Bonza will progressively roll out Gold Coast services to Albury, Avalon, Bundaberg, Cairns, Darwin, Gladstone, Launceston, Mackay, Melbourne, Mt Isa, Mildura, Rockhampton and the Whitsunday Coast, the majority of which are not currently serviced by any rival carrier.

Bonza CEO Tim Jordan said the collection of Gold Coast routes will target both holidaymakers and Aussies wanting to touch base with family.



"We know that there are so many leisure travellers who will love the chance to take a Bonza flight or holiday to the Gold Coast, but that there are also a lot of people from the Goldie and northern NSW catchments that want the chance to connect with loved ones or explore new places," Jordan said.

"Today's launch is a milestone... as we ramp up operations to the end of the year with 21 destinations and 38 routes, and next year we look forward to making air travel accessible to the many, not the few," he added.

Bonza is aiming to have at least 10 planes in the air by the end of next year. *AB*

EK takes a load off Safran



EMIRATES is setting aside US\$1.2 billion to upgrade the interiors aboard its fleet of Airbus A350s, Boeing 777-9s and existing Boeing 777-300s.

Revealed at the Dubai Airshow overnight, the major Middle Eastern carrier announced a new deal inked with aircraft equipment-maker Safran will see next-generation seating installed on its jets to enhance comfort and privacy, as well as RAVE AeroConnect Ka solutions to enhance connectivity.

"This end-to-end solution will disrupt the in-flight connectivity status quo by offering Emirates unrivalled flexibility in entertainment and provider choice," Emirates said.

The new Safran deal will also see Emirates supplied with high-performance wheels and carbon brakes for its A350 fleet, new Galley shipsets, and assistance with a flagged retrofit program to update seating aboard the airline's Boeing 777 and Airbus A380 aircraft. *AB*

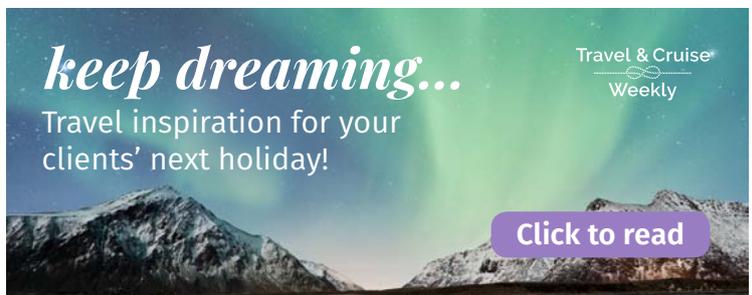
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Agents get their thrills in Texas



THE three lucky winners of Canuckiwi's Sell Your Way to the USA incentive recently enjoyed a week of exploration in Grapevine in Texas, as well as Oklahoma. Winners Kate Moriarty and Lee Rabbidge, Infinity Holidays and Karen McIntosh, NZ Travel Brokers were hosted by Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau's Madelyn Winter and David Taylor and Oklahoma

Tourism's Todd Stallbauer. Highlights of the trio's whirlwind trip included checking out the vibrant music scene in Tulsa, exploring the history and heritage of Oklahoma, and wine and brew tasting in Grapevine, where they also walked the Art Rock Trail and visited Historic Nash Farm. Moriarty, McIntosh and Rabbidge are **pictured** in Bass Pro Shops Grapevine. *JM*

Serko "maximising growth"

TRAVEL management company Serko has announced a total income of NZ\$36.3 million for the first half of FY2024, up 87% on the previous reporting period.

The company's revenue growth across managed and unmanaged travel came off the back of 2.5 million online bookings for the period, up 26%.

Serko posted an EBITDA loss of NZ\$800,000, as well as a net loss after tax of NZ\$7.2 million, which were improvements of 96% and 64% respectively.

The company's average monthly cash burn was NZ\$600k, an 84% improvement, thanks to higher revenue and limited cost growth.

The Booking.com for Business partnership (**TD 12 May**) also boosted Serko's revenue, with the company recording 1.3 million completed room nights, up 192%.

Chief Executive and co-founder Darrin Grafton said Serko's first-half results reflect its focus

on maximising growth from the travel recovery, materially growing revenue under the Booking.com for Business partnership, and putting Serko on a clear path to profitability.

"We are executing according to our plans and are now strengthening the depth of our capability and building a scaled and globally competitive business," he said.

"The first-half result also benefitted from a higher average revenue per booking, favourable foreign exchange rates, and higher-than-expected business travel volumes.

"The results being delivered under the Booking.com partnership reflect the continued focus of Serko and Booking.com teams and encouraging levels of customer demand."

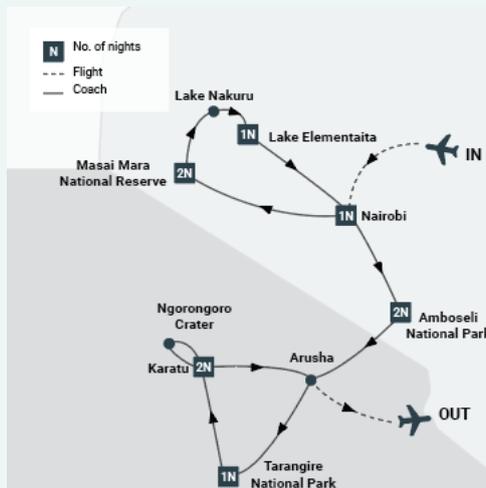
Serko has increased its FY24 year guidance for total income to NZ\$67m-\$74m. *MS*

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VA cancels Fiji flights

VIRGIN Australia was yesterday forced to cancel three return flights from Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane to Nadi as a safety precaution due to Cyclone Mal.

"We are closely monitoring Cyclone Mal & encourage guests booked to Fiji in the coming days to monitor flight info," VA said.

QantasLink unveils new A220



THE Flying Kangaroo's regional airline QantasLink has unveiled a striking Aboriginal livery for its first brand-new Airbus A220 aircraft, which has just rolled out of the paint shop at Airbus' facility in Mirabel, Canada.

Boasting the most complex livery Airbus has ever completed for this aircraft type, the A220 features the artwork of senior Pitjantjatjara artist Maringka Baker, which tells the Dreaming story of two sisters who traverse remote Australia together.

It took around 100 painters using 130 stencils over a period of two weeks to replicate the detailed designs, which feature over 20,000 dots.

Qantas Group CEO Vanessa Hudson described the new aircraft as a "game-changer for domestic and regional travel".

"These aircraft have the potential to change the way our customers travel across the country, with the ability to connect any two cities or towns

in Australia," she commented.

"That means faster and more convenient travel for business trips and exciting new possibilities for holiday travel."

The plane (pictured), which seats 137 passengers, is the first of 29 A220s that will be delivered to Qantas Group as part of its domestic fleet renewal program (TD 12 Jul).

Prior to joining the fleet before the end of the year to service the Melbourne-Canberra route, the A220 will undergo a series of post-production test flights with Airbus and get fitted with Qantas-specific equipment.

QantasLink expects to take delivery of another six A220s by mid-2025, which it will use to mostly connect smaller capital cities like Canberra and Hobart, with major hubs like Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney.

The general public has been invited to help name the rest of the new A220 fleet after Australian native wildlife. JM



Window Seat

WHILE Elvis lives on through his iconic rock 'n' roll music and indelible impact on pop culture, his once-glamorous private jet may also get to live on...only in a different form.

After Jimmy and James, the guys behind popular YouTube channel Jimmy's World, won the 1962 Lockheed 1329 JetStar at an auction for US\$234,000, their initial plan was to restore the plane to its former glory and see it return to the skies.

Alas, their hopes were dashed after professionals assessed the plane, which had been sitting abandoned for 40 years in New Mexico, and told them bluntly "there's no possible way that plane is flying".

Aside from the eye-watering US\$5.7 million it would take to fix the old jet up, it would never meet government regulations.

Disappointed but nonetheless determined to revive the King of Rock 'n' Roll's plane, the boys have come up with an out-of-the-box solution.

"We are going to convert Elvis's private jet into Elvis's private RV," Jimmy revealed.



Travel Daily Bon Voyage 2023

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More to come on the Mekong



VIKING has introduced the latest edition to its river fleet in Southeast Asia, the new *Viking Tonle* (pictured), designed to sail the Mekong River.

The under-construction ship is scheduled to debut in Oct 2025, when she will join her sister ship *Viking Saigon* to operate the cruise line's popular 15-day Magnificent Mekong itinerary.

Sailing between Kampong Cham, Cambodia and My Tho, Vietnam, guests on board *Viking Tonle* will discover silk towns, fishing villages, monasteries and floating markets as they explore the cultural treasures of the region.

With a capacity to host 80 guests, the new three-deck vessel will feature 40 outside staterooms sporting the brand's signature Scandinavian design.

All staterooms will offer hotel-style beds and floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors with a Veranda or French Balcony, while guests will also enjoy a spa and fitness centre, pool, and open-air Sky Bar on the upper deck.

"The rich history and culture of Vietnam and Cambodia have always made the Mekong River a fascinating destination for our guests," Chairman of Viking Torstein Hagen said.

"With the addition of an identical sister ship in 2025, we look forward to introducing even more curious travellers to the treasures of this fantastic region in the years to come."

Catering to strong demand for Mekong River voyages, Viking has added departures in 2025 as well as opening the entire 2026 season for booking.

Travellers can save up to \$2,000 per couple thanks to The Heart of Exploring sale, on until 30 Nov - head to viking.com. JM

SIA targets 5% SAF

SINGAPORE Airlines (SIA) and its subsidiary Scoot have announced a new target of replacing 5% of their total fuel requirements with sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) by 2030.

The airline group said that alongside adding new generation aircraft and greater operational efficiencies, SAF will play a pivotal role in the airlines' overall decarbonisation strategy.

While acknowledging its own need to reach carbon zero as soon as possible, the carrier's SIA CEO Goh Choon Phong called for greater collaboration in the aviation sector's pursuit of achieving similar green goals.

"We cannot do this alone, deeper collaboration with partners and stakeholders...is needed for all of us to meet our collective sustainability targets," he argued.

"We will continue to find opportunities to work together to support the greater production and use of SAF in the industry and other decarbonisation initiatives."

CHINA IS BACK!



LEADING China specialists Wendy Wu Tours has just returned from its very first Australia agent famil to China! Over eight action-packed days, the group visited the vibrant cities of Shanghai, Xian, and Beijing.

The journey kicked off in Shanghai, with a visit to the futuristic Pudong district, the Bund riverfront and a trip on the Maglev train, travelling at speeds of up to 301km per hour!

Xian was a highlight, home to the world-famous Terracotta Warriors and the City Wall light show. The group also enjoyed the cultural extravaganza of the Tang Dynasty Show.

Next, they arrived in Beijing by bullet train where they took in the Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven and of course the incredible Great Wall - a fitting end to an incredible adventure.

TOP: Meeting the locals in Xian.

MIDDLE: The magnificent Great Wall of China.

BOTTOM: Touchdown in China!

The group's first day in the Paris of the Orient, Shanghai. Back

(L-R): Rachel Sorenson, Flight Centre Livingston WA; Anita Fanfulla, Helloworld Tunstall SQ Vic; Ed Bradford, Travel Managers Bunninyong Vic; Sharna Laidlaw, Flight Centre Port Macquarie NSW; Anita Fanfulla, Helloworld Tunstall SQ Vic; Morena Agapito, Flight Centre Greensborough Vic; Naomi Hammond, Helloworld Croydon Hills Vic; Karan Gray, Figtree Travel NSW; Isabelle Tremblay, Earl & Turner Travel Associates Cotton Tree, Qld; Todd McGeary, Helloworld Ballina Qld; Ellie Perry-Amerikov, italktravel NSW; Kelsey Farmer, Helloworld Belmont WA; and Lauren Zanesco, itravel Griffith NSW.



Famil IN FOCUS is our feature showcasing some of the photos from recent industry famils. If you want your famil to be featured, email advertising@traveldaily.com.au.

Content produced in collaboration with Destination Canada

CANADA'S autumnal wonderland is a painter's dream, shares Destination Canada: a stunning medley of reds, oranges, greens and golds, set against a piercing blue sky.

With fewer crowds and an abundance of outdoor adventures, savvy Australian travellers are now choosing this special time of year to explore Canada's national parks and extensive waterways.

The idyllic [Niagara](#) escarpment comes alive during autumn, and is best explored on two wheels, with a stopover in picturesque Niagara-on-the-Lake.

This breathtaking wine region offers a sensory feast, with award-winning ice-wines, farm-to-table fare, and lush orchards.

Visitors can hike or mountain bike through Canada's vast forests adorned with the vibrant hues of autumn, canoe its glittering turquoise lakes, or embark on the horseback ride of a lifetime.



©Michael Hynes

[Discover Banff Tours](#) provides guided horseback trail rides along Alberta's tranquil Bow River, a region abundant with wildlife, serving up panoramic views of the magnificent Rocky Mountains that surround it.

Autumn is also prime time for northern lights viewing,

particularly in northern [Manitoba](#), the [Northwest Territories](#), and the [Yukon](#), where clear inky skies provide stellar viewing conditions.

Tour operators throughout Canada make it easy for visitors to experience this awe-inspiring phenomenon.



©Destination Ontario

Time to romance the rails

THE [Agawa Canyon Tour Train](#) shows off autumn in all its glory.

The one-day excursion sets off in Sault Ste. Marie in northeastern Ontario for a journey along pristine lakeshores, through granite rock formations and alongside forests awash in brilliant hues of ochre, crimson and gold.

To experience the true diversity of Canada's landscape, VIA Rail's legendary [The Canadian](#) has it all.

A once-in-a-lifetime cross-

country journey, the four-day trip kicks off in Toronto and meanders through Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

Just 30 minutes from Quebec City, the [Train de Charlevoix](#) combines panoramic vistas ablaze with hues of orange, crimson, and shimmering yellow, with the old-world charm of French-Canadian villages in Quebec's Charlevoix region, for an unforgettable autumn adventure.

Cruising through autumn

CANADA'S legendary road trips are best undertaken during autumn when the highways are framed by blazing autumn foliage.

The vast tundra and towering mountains in Canada's north-western [Yukon Territory](#) transform from green to blazing orange, yellow and red during the months of Aug, Sep and through

to early Oct.

The long hours of sunlight give way to earlier nights, heralding the beginning of the northern lights season.

Travellers can rent an RV or enjoy day trips from the capital city of Whitehorse, to take advantage of this colourful, magical season.



©NLemieux

TRY SOMETHING NEW...TRY CANADA



CANADA

THE FCTG Independent Global ICONS 2023 event exceeded expectations, celebrating triumphs aboard Uniworld's *S.S. Beatrice* from Budapest to Vienna.

This exclusive cruise brought together the global elite, honouring the top 50 agents/agencies, with special recognition for the top 10 from each region.

Wednesday 15th Nov 2023

Against the stunning Danube River backdrop, attendees experienced a seamless blend of luxury and achievement.

Key sponsors included Uniworld, Adventure World Travel, Lindblad Expeditions, The Travel Corporation, and Cover-More Insurance, who played integral roles in curating an unforgettable experience.

The unique event blended professional networking with leisure, fostering valuable connections and shared insights.

ICONS 2023 on the *S.S. Beatrice* stands as a testament to success, FCTG said, underlining the strength of the FCTG Independent Global community and the pivotal contributions of its esteemed sponsors.

To find out more about joining the FCTG Independent network, get in contact today and email ind_enquiries@flightcentre.com.



THE Aussie Icon contingent.



JASON Buckley, NZ GM and Nick Queale, Aus GM hosting the evening cocktail party.



A QUICK snap in Bratislava.



EVENING pre-dinner cocktail parties/presentations aboard *S.S. Beatrice*.



ALL Icons at the Vienna Art History Museum.



DINNER onboard *S.S. Beatrice*.



GLOBAL Head of Marketing and Brand, Allie Sparr, presenting at a pre-dinner cocktail party.



AN EXTREMELY warm welcome to ICONS 2023 from Uniworld CEO, Ellen Bettridge.



SILENT PJ Disco hosted by Singapore Airlines.



APEROL hour on *S.S. Beatrice*.

FCTG TARGETING LUXURY GROWTH

THE addition of the Luxperience trade show to Flight Centre's portfolio (**TD** yesterday) is just one part of a multifaceted approach to "luxury leadership", according to Anna Burgdorf, Brand & Marketing Director for FCTG's global luxury business.

Speaking to **TD** at Luxperience at ICC Sydney, Burgdorf noted that the upmarket B2B event is the only one of its kind in Australia.

"That was definitely one of the things that attracted us, and made us think that if we were building a luxury portfolio within our business, which is what we've spent the last few years doing, the addition of an incredible showcase like Luxperience was something that was obviously extremely attractive to us."

Burgdorf said Flight Centre was well-placed to take Luxperience to new heights, with this week's inaugural event under its new ownership seeing the show return in-person for the first time in four years.



She said client experience is key, with the overall plan for Luxperience aiming to connect the right groups of people to bring luxury in all its forms to life.

"In curating the partners who are here, and the travel professionals who are here, that's where the magic happens."

"Luxperience is just one piece of the puzzle, with Flight Centre also operating its own consumer-facing luxury travel events, as well as in-house client showcases,

so it is working as a nice little ecosystem of events to really build out the offer for the luxury clients in the industry," she said.

Earlier this year Flight Centre Travel Group also acquired UK-based luxury operator Scott Dunn (**TD** 31 Jan) as part of the strategy to expand its luxury leisure division, with Scott Dunn's Sales & Product Director Simon Lynch (**pictured** with Travel Associates chief Rachel Kingswell) visiting this week from the UK. *BP*

Sea Raes in Sydney

M.Y. SEA Raes, the luxury superyacht operated by the owners of Byron Bay's iconic boutique hotel Raes on Wategos, is in Sydney for the summer and is available for day, overnight or private charters across the season.

The fully-crewed floating retreat can accommodate up to eight guests for overnight stays and up to 30 for day charters, and is "perfectly suited to elevated long lunches and private events throughout the celebratory season", with tailored menus curated by two-hatted executive chef Jason Saxby.

More at searaes.com.au.

Genomic wellness

CHIVA-SOM'S Zulal Wellness Resort in Qatar has launched a genomic testing service to help guests explore how genes determine the effects that nutrients have on their body and health.

The approach is "at the forefront of hyper-personalised health and wellness", with reports able to reveal information on guests' predisposition to certain diseases and health-related traits, along with recommendations on how to mitigate risks by adopting healthier habits.

For details see zulal.com.

Grandeur arrives

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises has welcomed its sixth ship, with *Seven Seas Grandeur* to welcome her first guests later this week.

A special christening event will take place in Miami on 10 Dec, overseen by Godmother Sarah Faberge.

New Tassie dates

STRONG demand has seen the addition of new 2024 departures for Tasmania's Coast to Coast Luxury Journey, which combines Saffire Freycinet with On Board's new purpose-built *Odalisque III* catamaran - see saffire-freycinet.com.au.

St Regis Riyadh

ST REGIS Hotels & Resorts has made its debut in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the opening of the new St Regis Riyadh this week.

The debut in designer precinct Via Riyadh marks Marriott International's 500th luxury property globally.

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ACCOMMODATION

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Hotel Indigo Sydney Potts Point has opened its doors, marking the brand's debut in the Harbour City. The 105-room boutique hotel is located behind the iconic Coca-Cola sign in the Kings Cross neighbourhood. The onsite restaurant and bar, Luc-san, will be led by Luke Mangan, a renowned local chef, who has developed a French-Japanese menu. He will also oversee The X Cafe in the hotel lobby, which features a turntable with vintage records.



Guests staying at **Hyatt Regency Hakone Resort** in Japan can now indulge in renewed wellness treatments at its Spa IZUMI. Launched earlier this month, the enhanced treatments draw inspiration from Hakone's culture and natural beauty, allowing guests to immerse in the unique essence of the region. The 'Onsen Leg Relief' is one of the new treatments available, along with a revamp of the spa's signature treatment, Fruitherapy.



The luxury Bahamian Island retreat, **The Cove Eleuthera**, has reopened its doors after enhancing its culinary, resort and destination experiences. The 29-room beachfront property has refreshed all of its common spaces and the signature restaurant, as well as the guestrooms, which consist of villas, suites and bungalows. Guests will also be able to snorkel among seahorses, with the resort now offering a new excursion to Sweetings Pond.



Homewood Suites by Hilton Montgomery in the US state of Alabama has completed a property-wide renovation, bringing upgrades to all of its guestrooms and public spaces. Guests can now enjoy new seating, lighting, flooring, wall coverings, furniture and artworks throughout the property. The hotel also offers free wi-fi, spacious communal areas, and a 24-hour convenience store.



Ardo is set to land in Townsville this Dec as the Queensland city's first luxury hotel. The urban oasis boasts 132 high-end rooms and suites and features world-class dining spaces and a luxurious day spa, as well as a rooftop pool deck overlooking the Coral Sea. The hotel will appeal to all types of travellers, with three different room options available for guests to choose from.

EXPERIENCE

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We're bigger and bolder



MORE than 500 Flight Centre leaders from around the world made their way to Brisbane last week for the travel brand's inaugural global conference.

Focusing on the theme 'Fortune favours brave leadership', the two-day event allowed leaders from the UK, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia to connect in one place.

Attendees were able to let their hair down at a Fri night party on board event vessel **Oasis Brisbane (pictured)**, as well as enjoying an all-Aussie themed 'buzz' night at Felons Barrell Hall and an 'Amazing Race' around Brisbane's CBD and the FCTG Global HQ.

"We've never held a global conference for our iconic brand of this scale...we're all feeding off the energy of having our global leaders gathered in one place," Flight Centre Global Managing Director Andrew Stark enthused.

"Their enthusiasm to gel and collaborate globally is truly what puts our Flight Centre Brand in a league of its own as a global, modern brand."

The conference was also

attended by 68 representatives from Flight Centre's corporate partners across air, tour, cruise, insurance and more, including the likes of Intrepid, Sabre and Qatar Airways. *JM*

NT Govt bolsters Aboriginal tourism

THE Northern Territory Government has partnered with Indigenous Business Australia to explore more opportunities in expanding Northern Territory's Aboriginal tourism experiences.

Announced today at the second annual NT Aboriginal Tourism Forum in Alice Springs, the NT Aboriginal Tourism Accelerator program will aid Aboriginal entrepreneurs to develop sustainable tourism businesses.

Participants can apply **HERE** before 01 Dec to receive formal training, practical skillset enhancements, and access to advisors, coaches and networks.

Minister of Tourism Joel Bowden said the program aligns with the Govt's commitment to develop the Aboriginal tourism sector.



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The Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre

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