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Travel Daily First with the news

Friday 24th Nov 2023



NCL Black Fri deals

FOR A limited time, travellers can enjoy a \$500 airfare credit when they book any Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) sailing, as well as up to 50% of cruises, a free beverage package, and more.

There's also plenty of perks on offer for travel agents too - see the cover page for details.

Nominate for CLIA

NOMINATIONS are now open for Cruise Line Industry Association (CLIA)'s 21st Cruise Industry Awards.

Agents can put their own name or that of a colleague's forward until 30 Nov - see the back page.

VA rejects Qantas Indo bid

VIRGIN Australia would like the Federal Government to allow more capacity on air routes to Indonesia so that it can expand its services to the country's most popular market and better compete with the likes of Qantas.

The desire was listed in a letter to the IASC this week, which is currently determining if Qantas should be allowed to expand its codeshare relationship with Garuda to Indonesia (TD 11 Oct).

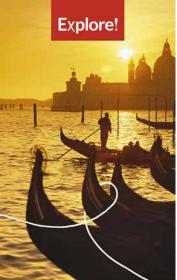
Outside of wanting changes to the bilateral agreement, VA wants any expansion to the QF-GA c'share rejected, claiming any approval would raise barriers to entry for a rival Australian carrier to successfully compete on routes like Australia to Jakarta - even if more capacity was made available at a future date.

VA was also critical that Qantas' application was not inclusive of its Jetstar subsidiary, which when added means QF, JQ and GA had a combined 58% of Australia-Indonesia capacity in the 12 months to Apr 2024.

"Overall, the public benefits claimed by Qantas in its application are marginal and they certainly do not outweigh the potential negative impact that the proposed codeshare will have on competitors on services to Jakarta," Virgin argued. AB

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of the latest industry travel news, including our Corporate Update page, plus a cover wrap from Norwegian Cruise Line and a full page from CLIA.



Chat with Sir Richard



AUSTRALIA and New Zealand travel agents will have the opportunity to have a live Q&A session with the human headline himself, Sir Richard Branson, about Virgin Voyages next week.

The exclusive chat will be a "global first" and will take place this Mon at 9am AEST on the cruise line's 'Welcome to The Bridge' Australia and New Zealand Facebook page.

CLICK HERE for more details.



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Ponant tech deal

PONANT has selected the

Syroco EfficientShip platform to

support the design and digital

modelling of its 14th ship (TD

06 Jul), with the solution able

and energy usage.

to create a "digital twin" of the

The move was announced in

Sydney yesterday by Ponant Deputy CEO, Belinda Hindmarsh,

who told TD the "Swap2Zero"

ship would be ready by 2030,

powered by the wind, sun, fuel

cells and carbon capture devices.

Ponant believes the new ship

will be a "catalyst for new energy

solutions, with a high replicability

platform provided by the Climate

marine decarbonisation - more in

itravel

today's issue of Cruise Weekly.

potential", with the Syroco

Tech startup which supports

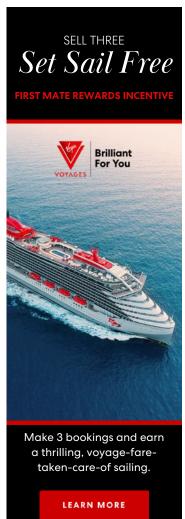
vessel and simulate its operations

Qatar, FIFA extend

QATAR Airways has renewed its long-standing partnership with FIFA, which will see it remain as the football tournament's Global Airline Partner until 2030.

Announced at Hamad International Airport this week on the one-year anniversary of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, the agreement will cover significant tournaments including the World Cup in 2026 and 2030, the Women's World Cup in 2027, as well as all youth men's and women's tournaments.

Qatar Airways Group CEO Badr Mohammed Al-Meer said he was excited to renew the collaboration, adding "as an airline, we are committed to connecting the world, and this partnership allows us to reach millions of football fans".



MEL rail project stalls



MELBOURNE Airport is struggling to reach an agreement with the Victorian State Government on a long-awaited rail link to Tullamarine, which was originally supposed to be ready in 2029 (TD 09 May 2018).

The multi-billion-dollar project (render pictured) is failing to gain traction, with both parties unable to see eye-to-eye on whether the airport station should be built above or below ground.

The State Govt said an elevated station would save taxpavers \$1 billion and take two fewer years to build, while Melbourne Airport believes an underground tunnel

would be more cost-effective.

"The time for the Airport Rail link was yesterday," WA Deputy Premier Ben Caroll said.

"We don't need any more obfuscation, we need to get on and deliver this project." JM

ATAS withdrawals

THREE travel businesses have failed to renew their ATAS membership in the last week under section 2.5(n) of the program's charter.

These include Helloworld Travel Engadine, Soundmart Tours Pty Ltd and Elite Travel Solutions.



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TA shakes on new SIA deal

TOURISM Australia (TA) has inked a new multi-year marketing agreement with Singapore Airlines (SIA) to jointly promote leisure tourism to Australia.

The deal will see the two parties provide joint funding to promote travel from key inbound markets including the UK, Germany, Singapore, India and Indonesia over a three-year period.

"Tourism Australia and Singapore Airlines have a long and successful history of working together on marketing activities to inspire more international travellers to visit Australia," TA MD Phillipa Harrison commented.

"At this critical time when international travel is continuing to rebuild and return to growth we are excited about formalising





our partnership with Singapore Airlines to urge more travellers to choose Australia for their next holiday," she added.

The collaboration follows a separate agreement between TA and SIA announced earlier this year, which focuses on encouraging business events travel to Australia (TD 15 Feb).

SIA Chief Commercial Officer Lee Lik Hsin said that the renewed deal was a testament to the importance of Australia in the carrier's global network.

"This partnership with Tourism Australia will allow us to jointly promote leisure travel through our Singapore hub, further driving traffic from key markets so that our customers can explore the beauty and diversity of Australia in 2024 and beyond," Hsin said.

Singapore Airlines Group, including low-cost carrier Scoot, now operates 140 services per week from seven Aussie cities direct to Singapore. JM

Pictured: Robin Mack, TA **Executive General Manager** Commercial and Business Events Australia, and Dai Haoyu, SIA **Acting Senior Vice President** Marketing Planning.

Travel Daily Learn more about **Italy with Travel Daily** Training Academy

Josh's new direction

GENERAL Manager for Strategic Partnerships at Crooked Compass, Josh Grocke, has departed the business after a six-month contract with the tour operator.

The experienced travel exec has recently moved to country Victoria and is receptive to hybrid and remote work opportunities.

Crooked Compass is yet to announce a replacement.

Etti makes BBC list

INTREPID Travel's Global Environmental Impact Manager, Dr Susanne Etti, has made it onto BBC's 100 Women list, an annual list of inspiring and influential women from around the world.

One of the travel and tourism industry's only climate scientists, Etti appears in the list among widely-recognised names such as former US First Lady Michelle Obama and human rights lawyer Amal Clooney.

She has led the adventure travel company to achieve several milestones, such as becoming first tour operator with verified science-based carbon reduction targets, and is also the author of the Carbon Measurement Blueprint for Tour Operators.





Celestyal ups 25/26

CELESTYAL Cruises has added Croatia, Montenegro and Italy to its 2024 and 2025 season, as well as six new ports, including Kefalonia, Dubrovnik, Kotor, Bari, Corfu and Katakolo.

Travellers can also enjoy the brand-new seven-night Heavenly Adriatic cruise, which features full days in Kefalonia, Kotor, Bari, and Corfu, a late-night stay in Dubrovnik and a half-day in Katakolo, priced from \$949 per person during the Black Fri promotions until 30 Nov.

MEANWHILE, guests who are already booked on the Celestyal Journey itineraries departing Athens on 02, 09 and 16 Mar 2024 have scored themselves a free 'Three Continents' cruise thanks to a generous new promotion from the line.





Intrepid Travel promotes Lunn

INTREPID Travel has announced the appointment of Abbe Lunn (pictured) to the role of Senior Key Partnerships Manager, seeing the experienced travel executive take charge of growing sales through the company's key partner network.

The news represents a promotion for Lunn, who was previously Intrepid's Partnerships Manager for close to 18 months, a position she took on after a brief stint working as Corporate Partnerships Account Manager for Save the Children Australia.

Lunn is no stranger to the Intrepid brand, having worked at the company for close to a decade between 2012 and 2021, holding various caps during that period, including Regional Sales and Partnership Manager and Partnership Growth Manager.

"Since returning to Intrepid, Abbe has done an exceptional job of being a true ambassador



for the company, engaging our partners at every level and leading with purpose and this promotion is very well deserved," Intrepid Travel's General Manager of Sales & Partnerships ANZ, Yvette Thompson said.

The local Intrepid team is also seeking to hire a Queensland Key Partnerships Manager as part of its ongoing growth strategy in the local market, AB

#TRAVELINSPO Doha

Click here for museum highlights

NOTES:

- Museums
- Culture



Alliance extends deal

ALLIANCE Airlines has inked a five-year flight agreement extension with BHP Olympic Dam.

The carrier has previously operated a fleet of 10 Embraer 190 aircraft in Adelaide to service the contract, a client that directly employs 208 employees in Adelaide and Roxby Downs.

"Alliance is...proud of the 16 years of uninterrupted services we have provided to BHP Olympic Dam," MD Scott McMillan said.

CX's taste of Italy

CATHAY Pacific has partnered with Hong Kong-based Italian restaurant Pirata to bring its authentic Italian fare to the skies.

The new menu is available now on board select flights departing from Hong Kong, featuring dishes like Calabrian-style orecchiette pasta with Italian sausage; baby octopus and crushed potato salad; and pork saltimbocca with mushroom jus.



Window Seat

SOME travellers prefer tropical getaways, others prefer a vibrant nightlife, but there are some who seek out something totally different...think strange, dark and unusual.

A group of Aussie tourists have snuck into the abandoned town of Wittenoom in Western Australia, which has earnt the reputation of "the world's most dangerous ghost town".

The town is surrounded by 50,000 hectares of lethal blue asbestos, which ultimately claimed around 2,000 lives before it was abandoned.

The town's morbid history, along with threat of prosecution for trespassers, only serves to heighten its appeal among 'Dark Tourism' travellers, who love to explore dangerous places.



CORPORATE UPDATE

Adopt Al early, claims Elf

ARTIFICIAL intelligence has the ability to enhance the corporate traveller experience and improve program effectiveness if adopted early with clear objectives, FCM Global COO Melissa Elf believes.

Speaking at a CTC Think Tank: A Meeting of the Minds panel session yesterday, the senior Flight Centre executive said that new technologies like AI are creating "a huge opportunity" for travel managers to make trips safer, more sustainable and highly personalised, like never before.

"Globally, mobile workforce numbers have increased astronomically and with that comes new measures for dutyof-care, the customer experience and reporting, and in our organisation, we continue to place a strong emphasis on how new technologies respond to this need," Elf (pictured) noted.

Citing a recent White Paper from Mastercard which suggested most travel decision-makers see leveraging AI as a technological challenge, EIf added that the travel industry needed to lead the short-term investment, labelling the move as "critical".

BA suite delays

BRITISH Airways has conceded it is unlikely to complete a planned rollout of its new Club Suite Business class seat across its Heathrow-based fleet until the end of 2026, 12 months later than originally flagged.



"As AI becomes more pervasive across customers, travel management companies and suppliers, the ability to integrate parts of the end-to-end travel eco-system will become an increasing reality," she said.

The same White Paper also found that 91% of companies are planning to invest in Al and machine learning to provide staff with a more personalised experience in the next five years, believing the move will improve travel and expense processes.

Reflecting on how FCM will be utilising AI, Elf said the business is looking to automate expense and payment processes, create more dynamic policies, and apply smarter spend controls. AB

Credit card wastage

BUSINESS travellers are losing up to \$90 in fees associated with credit card purchases of over \$2,000 while overseas, a new report from Money Transfer Comparison has showed.

The same study found that more than half of SMEs are opting for credit cards while on business abroad despite paying higher charges, with most citing convenience and a lack of time to find better options as the reason.



Italy gets back to its roots



THE Italian National Tourist Board (INTB) brought a group of Aussie agents to southern Italy earlier this week for ROOTS-in, one of the world's only international trade events devoted to ancestry tourism.

Taking place in Basilicata, the two-day event attracted more than 500 delegates from around the world, with the aim of promoting roots tourism and developing specific package tours with Italian suppliers.

The Aussie cohort, which included representatives from Utracks, Albatross Tours and Holidays of Australia & The World, also enjoyed a pre-conference familiarisation tour to the hilltop town of Viggiano.

Highlights included a pastamaking class, an aperitivo hour, and a performance of Apra Viggianese in the central square.

"Italian descendants represent a tourism segment with enormous potential," INTB Australia & NZ Country Manager Emanuele Attanasio commented.

"They often visit smaller regions and travel year-round...which helps contribute to our mission of encouraging visitor dispersal across the country and seasons."

Pictured: Emanuele Attanasio, INTB; Megan Thackray, Albatross Tours; Marco Patavino, Il Globo; Michele Salazar, UTracks; and Cos Matteo, Holidays of Australia & The World. *IM*

UK turns to agents

IN SOME reassuring news for travel agents everywhere, a recent survey in the United Kingdom showed that 40% of travellers believe that booking through an agent is more reliable than booking directly.

The same study from Equals Money indicated that a third were willing to pay more for expert advice and local insights from their travel agent.

Travel & Cruise



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NTIA's fabulous Friday night function

THERE'S no wonder that the Australian Travel Industry Association has confirmed that next year's National Travel industry Awards (NTIAs) will once again be a two-night affair (TD yesterday), after the huge success of the inaugural Fri evening gathering which took place a week ago at InterContinental The Rialto in Melbourne. About 150 people attended the get-together, including key sponsors, NTIA finalists and industry

> stakeholders, ramping up the excitement ahead of the industry night of nights which took place on Sat at the Crown Palladium.

Travel Daily was there too, and captured these shots prior to heading off to the Holey Moley extravaganza where guests enjoyed networking and friendly competition.

The 2023 Pre-NTIA Extravaganza was generously sponsored by CVFR Travel Group and Viking Cruises, who stepped up to support the first-time event.

For more from the NTIAs including lots more photos, all the winners and several of the post-win videos conducted by the Travel Daily team, see our wrap of the gala weekend which is now online at travelbulletin.com.au.



PETE Rawley, Evolution Travel Collective; ATIA Chairman Tom Manwaring from Express Travel Group; David Padman; Stu Udy, Expedia; and Ingrid Berthelsen, Evolution Travel Collective.



Karnik, Ram Chhabra and Nidhi Nijhawan.



WEBJET Director Katrina Barry with Travellers Choice chief Christian Hunter.

AMBER Kelly, NIB Insurance with Singapore Airlines' Rosanna Piaggio and Adam Kelly, Scoot.



JEREMY Murdoch from KPMG with Steve Hui, iflyflat.

ATIA'S Richard Taylor with Emily Kadinski and Sue Todorovski, itravel Carlingford.



FIONA Richards from Sabre with Louise and Brett Dann, Hunter Travel Group and David Greenland, Reed & Mackay.



JAMES Hewlett with Nicola Strudwick, Travellers Choice.



LOUIS Teng, Travel Associates with Tamara Kobiolke, Numinous Luxury Travel Representation.



CLUB Med's Michelle Nickelson with Zoe Gentle from Air Canada.



SPECIALS

Send your special deals to: specials@traveldaily.com.au

Travellers can fly from \$49 with Virgin Australia's latest sale, which sees the carrier drop more than half a million discounted fares across its network for travels between 10 Jan and 20 Jun 2024 - learn more HERE.

Guests can save up to 20% with P&O Cruises' Black Friday offers, when they make their bookings by 27 Nov. The offer is available on inside cabins on selected departures between 15 Mar & 30 Nov 2024 - call 1300 159 454.

Travellers can score select Antarctic 2023/24 departures with Quark **Expeditions** for half price thanks to the tour operator's Black Friday promotion. Explore more discounted fares and incentives HERE.

Air Vanuatu is offering return Australian fares to Port Villa from as low as \$510 per person through its earlybird deal. Valid until midnight 15 Dec, the return fares include taxes, an onboard meal and 30kg luggage allowance. CLICK HERE to book.

Jetstar has released over 140,000 free return fares across 85 different routes as part of its Black Friday sale, available until 27 Nov. The public can now access the sale HERE, while Club Jetstar members were given exclusive early access yesterday morning.

As Riviera Travel River Cruises celebrates its 40th anniversary, the cruise line is offering sailors up to \$1,500 discounts per person for bookings between 20 Nov and 31 Dec 2023. Call 1300 857 437 to book.

Save 5% on your next safari in South Africa if you book a tour with Bench Africa before on Dec. The offer is limited to the tour operator's South Africa brochure products only. Call 1300 237 422 for more.

Cunard is offering great savings on a select range of voyages from \$449pp for its Black Friday sale. Offers included in the sale are the 18-night Sydney to Tokyo voyage, the five-night Sydney to Tasmania, and the two-night Sydney to Melbourne. Call 13 24 41.

Trafalgar is offering 10% savings for a limited time on select 2024 Ireland tours. Itineraries on the offer include the two-week Amazing Ireland tour from \$5,895 per person, and so much more. View all the eligible tours HERE.

There is still time to save up to 60% on Ayers Rock Resort accommodation. Ending on 29 Nov, rates for the hotel's Superior Room starts from \$290 per night, twin share, when you stay three nights or more. Call 1300 134 044 to book.

Travellers can save up to 14% on stays at Broken Hill Outback Resort until o1 Mar 2024, with prices starting from \$160 per cabin per night. Call on 1300 679 688 to book.

SEALIFE Sydney is offering up to 30% off on selected gift vouchers. Ending on 27 Nov, the popular Shark Dive Xtreme Gift Voucher is now priced at \$230.30 per adult, down from \$329. See all the offers HERE.





Travel Daily Training Academy

EK lands a SAF world-first



EMIRATES has become the first airline in the world to operate an A380 demo flight using 100% Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), which can reduce carbon emissions by up to 85% compared to conventional jet fuel.

With the eco-fuel powering one of four engines, the flight took off from Dubai International Airport earlier this week to demonstrate the potential of SAF as a drop-in replacement, with full compatibility across the aircraft's existing systems.

The landmark flight helps highlight SAF as safe and reliable fuel source, paving the way for future standardisation, qualification and adoption of the eco-fuel at a time when the aviation industry is becoming increasingly focused on reducing its environmental impact.

The achievement was a joint effort, with Airbus, Engine Alliance, Pratt & Whitney, ENOC, Neste and Virent all providing their expertise.

"This is another proud moment for Emirates and our partners, as we put words into action with the research into and the trialling of higher concentrations of SAF

to eventually lead to industry adoption of 100% SAF flying," Emirates COO Adel Al Redha said.

"The growing global demand for lower-emission jet fuel alternatives is there, and the work of producers and suppliers to commercialise SAF and make it available will be critical in the coming years to help Emirates and the wider industry advance our path to lower carbon emissions." JM

The SA Influence

THE South Australian Tourism Commission has appointed Praytell to handle its PR strategy North America, where the agency will be charged with raising the tourism profile of the state.

Influencers will play a big part in the marketing mix, as will creative marketing campaigns and organising press trips.

"The biggest problem South Australia has in North America is awareness," said Simpson, adding "we are lucky that Americans and Canadians love Australia, but we need to get them to choose South Australia entirely or as part of their itinerary," SVP for Praytell Jamie Simpson said.

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For more information on Award Category criteria and how to nominate – please visit cruising.org.au Nominations are open to all CLIA Travel Agent members and close on 30 November 2023.