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## Last chance with NCL

**TODAY** is the final day that agents can double their money on all sailings with Norwegian Cruise Line's (NCL) Black Fri sale, which offers double dollars for any bookings deposited from 16-27 Nov via Partners First Rewards.

It is also the last day for clients to score up to half-price cruises, \$500 airfare credit on all sailings, a free beverage package, and many more bonuses.

Head to the **cover page** for the full list of benefits.



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SAVE UP TO 25% ON TRIPS  
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## Framework for the future

**AUSTRALIA** has launched its first National Sustainability Framework, a guide that all states and territories recently agreed is needed to enhance the rebounding visitor economy.

Unveiled at the Commonwealth Tourism Ministers Meeting in Qld on Fri, the framework looks to bolster Australia's green credentials through four pillars: a managed approach to sustainability, implementing climate action, respecting culture, and a positive social impact.

"Visitors are increasingly asking that world-class services are delivered in a way that is sensitive to the environment, to our culture and to our communities' needs," Federal Tourism Minister Don Farrell said.

Part of the sustainability push

has also seen the release of a Sustainability Toolkit, which provides practical information for tourism businesses to improve their environmental practices.

Ministers at the event also affirmed their support for THRIVE 2030, Australia's national long-term growth strategy, with visitor expenditure targets for 2024 already exceeded, recording \$191.4 billion of spend in the year ending Jun 2023. **AB**

### Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features seven pages of the latest travel industry news including a photo page from **Abercrombie & Kent**, plus a cover wrap from **Norwegian Cruise Line** and a full page from **Titan Travel**.

## CLIA noms closing

**THERE'S** only a few days left for travel agents to get their nominations in for the 21st Annual Cruise Industry Awards for Australasia next year.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) is calling on member agents to stand up and be counted before nominations close at the end of 30 Nov, **HERE**.

There are eight categories open to Australian CLIA members for self or peer nomination, including Cruise Consultant of the Year.



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## China visa-free trial

THE thawing of China-Australia relations is happening at an exciting time, with China trialling visa-free travel for citizens from a select number of countries.

While Australia is not currently on the list - that honour has gone to France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Malaysia - it is another key sign that China is looking to further open up its once-giant tourism economy.

The latest development allows residents from nations in the scheme to travel in China for up to 15 days without a visa, and will be active from next month until 30 Nov 2024.

Prior to the pandemic, China was a mecca for tourism, attracting around 145 million travellers a year, including around 800,000 Australians.

## New Qatar agent training

QATAR Tourism is ramping up Australian and NZ promotion of its Qatar Specialist travel advisor training program, and is inviting agents to upskill on the fast-growing destination.

Participants in the free online destination training program can learn on the go, with seven core courses available along with personalised content tailored to various types of travel businesses.

Registration is now open for the initiative, which is described as “a world-class training program that uses the latest technologies in digital learning and gamification”.

Fun and engaging content is complemented by downloadable collateral which agents can utilise to boost their marketing.

Courses available include the introductory “Qatar Essentials - Australia and NZ” which can be completed alongside optional specialties such as cruise, business events, luxury travel and modules on Qatar Airways and Hamad International Airport.

The Qatar Specialist training pathway also covers the country’s history, key tourism districts,

festivals & events, shopping, dining and entertainment and itinerary building tips.

Advisors who finish the program will receive a certificate of completion, and Visit Qatar is giving away a double movie pass for anyone who qualifies before the end of Dec.

The push comes amid a range of enhancements to the popular Qatar stopover program on offer through QR, including the recent introduction of an all-inclusive Doha Sands Beach packages (TD 17 Nov) - register for the training by [CLICKING HERE](#). BP

## A Titan of Christmas

TITAN Travel is starting the end-of-year festivities early by offering agents a \$100 Coles Myer voucher on every booking made between 01 Nov and 24 Dec.

The perks don’t end there though, with agents also able to earn an additional 5% commission, the chance to win a place on a fam to Sicily, and 10% off 10 of Titan’s most popular tours - see [page eight](#) for more.

## Ahoy there me Lady

VIRGIN Voyages’ *Resilient Lady* has officially entered Australian waters for the first time, sailing into Darwin this morning as part a 44-day repositioning voyage.

After a stop in the Top End, the vessel will make calls in Cairns, Airlie Beach and Sydney, before homeporting in Melbourne for her highly anticipated season.

“We’ve been dreaming about sailing in Australia and New Zealand for years, so reaching Darwin and entering Aussie water is an incredible moment for us and we can’t wait to see what our ‘MerMaiden’ voyage from Melbourne has in store,” VV’s CEO Nirmal Saverimuttu said.

On Fri, the line announced Virgin founder Richard Branson would host a Q&A agent session, which took place this morning.

# itravel



**KAREN RIDGE**

Mildura Travel and Cruise/  
Food & Wine Travel (VIC)  
itravel LiNK Affiliate

“I joined itravel for a more personalised approach to an agent group, and already that is what I have experienced. The team has been very warm, welcoming, and responsive which has been really refreshing.”

LET’S TALK

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## VA maximises Max-8 order

VIRGIN Australia (VA) has boosted its Boeing 737 Max-8 aircraft order, with six more now scheduled for delivery in the second half of 2024.

All up, the additions bring the Aussie carrier's number of Max-8s to 14, with the newest plane in the fleet, 'Bronte Beach', scheduled to arrive in the airline's home city of Brisbane this afternoon from the US.

The 11 remaining Max-8 aircraft are slated to arrive throughout next year, with VA to take delivery of one new aircraft almost every month next year.

The Max-8 aircraft will reduce emissions by at least 15% per flight compared to older generation 737s, and are also 40% quieter than existing 737s.

Meanwhile, VA's existing order of 25 x Max-10s, which are expected to arrive from late 2025, remains in place.

"Travel demand remains high



and we continue to grow and renew our fleet, enabling us to deliver great value and choice in the market," VA Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer Alistair Hartley said.

"A more modern, sustainable, and streamlined fleet is central to our ongoing transformation."

The carrier is continuing the momentum with a \$110m refresh and product upgrade across its existing fleet of 737s, which will see all-new seats installed in Business class and new or refreshed seats in Economy.

The project will also include the installation of in-seat power and in-flight wi-fi, taking place over the next 18-24 months. JM

## The Best of India and Sri Lanka

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## Gift of the Fifth

INSPIRING Vacations has reached the halfway point of its four-day working week trial 'Gift of the Fifth', which it says has proven "highly successful".

Around 80% of all team members have almost completed the first stage of the transition, with the company to progress through the remaining phases together, ultimately resulting in a gifted day off per week.

The initiative has resulted in no loss of productivity for the Australian-owned tour operator, which continues to enjoy strong growth, while employee surveys show nearly all participants report better work-life balance and greater job satisfaction.

"This is not a compressed working week or a pro-rated part-time week," co-founder and Chief Operating Officer James Cathie shared, adding "we've transformed the way we work while maintaining our competitive edge".

## AirAsia X to Almaty

AIRASIA X is set to become the first Malaysian airline to fly directly from Kuala Lumpur to Almaty, the commercial and cultural hub of Kazakhstan, from 14 Mar 2024.

The new route will offer Australian travellers a unique and affordable destination, with fares on sale now to Kuala Lumpur and FlyThru connecting services also on sale now from Perth, Melbourne and Sydney.

## Dublin warning

AUSTRALIAN travellers have been reminded by the Federal Government to avoid any demonstrations taking place in Dublin in light of recent violence and rioting in the Irish capital.

Four people were injured in a knife attack in central Dublin, sparking recent violent unrest.

Despite the warning, DFAT has kept its advisory at 'exercise normal safety precautions'.



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## Space travel study

WITH the world on the cusp of making space tourism a mainstay of the travel ecosystem, a Sydney academic has been awarded \$1 million by the US Air Force to investigate the effects that reduced gravity has on the human body.

Associate Professor Kate Poole from UNSW Medicine & Health will examine how living organisms may be disturbed by space travel, adding to an existing knowledge base of health impacts on astronauts, such as a loss of bone and muscle mass.

The funding coincides with a host of companies piloting a variety of space tourism flights, as well as plans by the likes of Elon Musk to send humans to Mars.

## QF's capital effort

FOLLOWING a period of high cancellations, Qantas has pledged to travellers that it will lift its performance on the troubled Sydney to Canberra route.

A spokesperson for the airline told local media that cancellation rates between Sydney and Canberra in Nov so far were down significantly on previous months.

"We are very focused on bringing down cancellations on flights between Sydney and Canberra and the measures we have put in place over the past few months are helping," a Qantas spokesperson said.

Of the 929 Qantas flights between Canberra and Sydney last month, 9.7% were cancelled.

## CATO strengthens US ties



THE Council of Australian Tour Operators' (CATO) Chair Dennis Bunnik recently flew to New York City to meet face-to-face with the United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA).

Bunnik joined USTOA's Executive Vice President Peggy Murphy to discuss the travel industry's path of recovery in a post-pandemic world, as well as how current geopolitical tensions are currently impacting the sector.

"Our members operate across borders and it is through these invaluable partnerships that we can collectively develop and advance our sector," the CATO Chair shared.

During the meeting, Bunnik also presented the latest advancements in CATO's accreditation program and consumer protection.

The two parties also exchanged insights on government lobbying,

including their experiences and key learnings to strengthen future advocacy efforts.

Both leaders agreed to share sector and market research, recognising the mutual benefits that such information exchange holds for their members.

According to CATO, the meeting reaffirmed its commitment to "innovating the travel sector through international collaboration, knowledge sharing, and unified advocacy" and "stands as a testament to the strength and resilience of the global travel community".

The meet-up was a continuation of dialogue between CATO and other travel associations around the world, and followed recent meetings with sister organisations in Canada and New Zealand (TD 22 Feb). JM

**Pictured:** Bunnik with USTOA's Peggy Murphy.



## Window Seat

IT WAS a happy ending of sorts for rescue workers who rushed to the scene of a suspected plane crash in British Columbia, with the wreckage determined not to be a crash site at all.

Canadian mounted police scrambled to the remote site only to find the plane was missing its motor, wings, doors and seats, and was likely more than two decades old to boot.

While some may have reflexively jumped to possible UFO activity, it didn't take too long for aviation experts to conclude the plane was part of search and rescue training.

Canada's Civil Air Search and Rescue Association came forward to take ownership of the old plane wreck, which they said had been used as a training prop last summer.

"We like to make it as real as possible for them, smoke, injured people, they love it and we get to treat it like a real downed aircraft," a spokesperson for the emergency services body sheepishly reasoned.



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\*For registration and eligibility, visit [trade.northernterritory.com](http://trade.northernterritory.com)





## First sailing sinks

LIFE at Sea Cruises' planned inaugural three-year voyage from Amsterdam has been scrapped after the company was forced to admit to customers it could not afford to buy the ship in which to undertake the sailing.

Originally scheduled to depart from Istanbul, the company relocated the start destination to the Netherlands in light of delays in negotiating the acquisition of the vessel, AIDA Cruises' *AIDAaura*, which ultimately got sold to Celestyal Cruises instead.

Life at Sea said it will make refund repayments in monthly installments from mid-Dec.

## Tourism WA brings back 'MD for a Day'

**TOURISM** Western Australia's 'MD for a Day' is returning for a second year to showcase the variety of roles and opportunities available to young people within the state's tourism industry.

The initiative will see Loc Vo, a 16-year-old student at Girrawheen Senior High School, shadow Tourism WA MD Carolyn Turnbull for a day to gain insight into the operations of WA's state tourism organisation and the sector overall.

"I am committed to raising the profile of the sector among secondary school students - they are the leaders of tomorrow, and it is so important to continually build a pipeline of workers to support the industry into the future," Turnbull said.

## Don't baguette about France



**ATOUT** France held a luncheon on Fri at The Langham, Sydney, to celebrate luxury travel in France, ahead of Jul's Olympic Games.

The lunch was held in conjunction with luxury French suppliers Hotel Plaza Athenee and Galeries Lafayette.

Attendees heard from suppliers from around the French luxury travel industry on their preparation for the Olympics, and how their business is readying for the 15 million expected to descend on Paris next year.

## It is Thai-m to buy

**THAI** Airways is reportedly considering purchasing up to 90 widebody jets from Boeing and Airbus in a bid to boost its dwindling fleet.

If the purchases go ahead it might be a surprise to many observers, who would note the airline has only recently exited a court-supervised bankruptcy debt restructuring process.

Official 2024 Summer Olympics sub-distributor Fortius was present, detailing attendees on some of the luxury hospitality packages available at next year's Games in Paris.

Pernod Ricard, on behalf of two of its most famous brands, G.H. Mumm and Martell, treated guests to a tippie of some of their products, and some of the experiences available to travellers visiting the famous champagne house in Reims.

Meanwhile, sharp-eared Globus Managing Director Gai Tyrrell won the door prize of a two-night stay at Hotel Plaza Athenee.

**Pictured** are Atout France Head of Marketing & Communications Sophie Almin, Hotel Plaza Athenee General Manager Francois Delahaye, Atout France Trade Marketing Manager Clelie Collas Martell Mumm & Perrier-Jouet National Brand Ambassador Emeline Troger, and Fortius Head of Sales & NOC Relations Daniel Beniston. *MS*

## 50% of families ready

**ONE** in two Australian families have indicated they are planning to travel over the next 12 months, according to new research conducted by *9Honey*.

The report also showed that families are planning to spend on average around \$8,800 on travel plans and accommodation, with Queensland listed as the most popular travel destination, followed by Victoria, the United States and Europe.

## Bali for schoolies

**NEW** data from Webjet shows that Australian school-leavers are exchanging Byron Bay for destinations further afield, with Bali seeing a surge in bookings.

Flight bookings for 18-19-year-olds are down 14% and 17% for Byron and Airlie Beach respectively this year, while the Gold Coast has also dropped off badly, down by 21% when compared to last year.

Meanwhile, bookings for Bali in the same demographic has risen by 159% during the same period.

## Indigenous boost

**THE** Northern Territory Government has delivered a boost to the Aboriginal tourism sector by awarding a total of \$590,000 in grants to eight local tourism businesses.

One of the recipients, Larrakia Development Corporation, received \$46,700 to help develop a new cultural centre, set to open in 2024 near Darwin Harbour.

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# A&K meets with Connoisseur members

**ABERCROMBIE & Kent (A&K)** was thrilled to welcome its Connoisseur Club members to its new office. A&K's Senior Leadership team gave the Connoisseur Club members an overview of the company's exciting future growth strategy for 2024 and beyond.

The day finished off with a celebration dinner and an awards presentation at the beautiful Botswana Butchery, recognising outstanding sales for 2023.

For more information on A&K's Connoisseur Club please contact your A&K Sales Manager directly or email [salessupport@abercrombiekent.com.au](mailto:salessupport@abercrombiekent.com.au).



**A&K Staff with Kendal Thomas, American Express.**



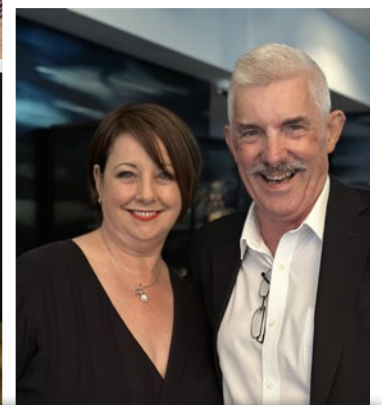
**A&K Sales & Senior Leadership Team.**



**A&K staff - Jaqui Tufala, Susan Haberle, Beth Ellicott, Kyah Tragardh, Alexa Papoulias, Hannah Taylor, and Debra Fox.**



**A&K staff with Renee Duncan, Platinum Escape.**



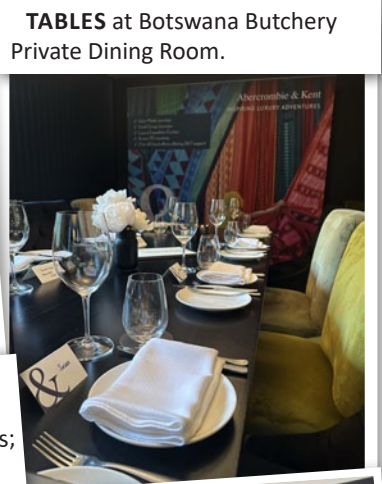
**ANN-MARIE Chapman, A&K with Michael Schischka, Mary Rossi Travel.**



**CONNOISSEUR Club members - Sharyn Kitchener, Mosman Travel; Louise Brown & Tina Killeen, Spencer Travel; & Melinda Gregor & Lewis Bespoke Travel.**



**CONNOISSEUR Club members - Chris McIlroy, Travel Inspirations; Christine Bottrell, Ashmore & James Travel Associates; and Julie Avery, Brighton Travelworld.**



**TABLES at Botswana Butchery Private Dining Room.**



**BETH Ellicott, A&K; Renee Duncan, American Express; and Chloe Ogilvie, Travelcall.**



**A&K at Botswana Butchery.**



**CONNOISSEUR Club Summit - A&K office.**



**ANN-MARIE Chapman, A&K; Felicity Moss, Jigsaw Travel; & Jaqui Tufala, Crystal.**

## BROCHURES

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brochures@traveldaily.com.au



### Viva Holidays - Canada 2024/25

Viva Holidays has released its 2024/25 Canada brochure. Featured is an extensive range of rail packages, escorted coach touring and self-drive holidays, plus an exciting selection of unique experiences including adventures to view grizzly bears and polar bears, as well as to see the Northern Lights. Travellers will find new sightseeing options such as Open Top Touring in the Canadian Rockies, brewery experiences in Ottawa and thermal spa packages in Quebec City, as well as new accommodation selections including Georgian Court Hotel in Vancouver and Klahoose Wilderness Resort in Desolation Sound.



### MSC Cruises - Mini Folder Summer 2024

Launched ahead of the Northern Hemisphere's summer, the new MSC Cruises' booklet showcases itineraries spanning Apr to Nov 2024. From the historically rich Mediterranean, the tranquil landscapes of Northern Europe and the tropical haven of the Caribbean, the mini folder has everything a traveller needs to arrange their ideal getaway. Some cruise holidays also align with the All in Plus promotion, valid until 31 Mar 2024.



### InsideJapan - Japan For Families

Available via InsideJapan's Agent Hub, the family travel specialist has unveiled a new brochure highlighting an array of family-friendly activities, experiences, and accommodation styles. Specially curated for Aussie families, the travel guide also reveals lesser-known destinations for more unique, hands-on experiences, including soba noodle cooking classes, tatedo sword-fighting lessons, a traditional ryokan stay, and more.



### Grand Pacific Tours - NZ Top of South Island

New Zealand's Top of the South Island is known for its mild climate, relaxed pace, untouched vistas and some of the most picturesque coastlines in the world. The latest brochure from Grand Pacific Tours showcases what's on offer in the region, from cruising through turquoise blue waters, to tasting world-famous wines and local seafood. The 11-day Top of the South Island itinerary is highlighted as an ideal holiday for first timers.

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## BNE turns trash into treasure



**BRISBANE** Airport (BNE) is bringing back its Lost Property Auction with a record number of items available to grab for a bargain just in time for Christmas.

The auction will sell off nearly 700 items left behind by travellers while passing through the terminals, in cases where the airport was unable to reunite belongings with their owners.

The proceeds raised from the sell-off will go to the *Courier-Mail* Children's Fund, which benefits Queensland children.

A wide variety of weird and wonderful items are set to go under the hammer, including dozens of laptops, iPads and phones, fine jewellery, portable speakers, gaming consoles, guitars, surfboards, prams, fishing rods, and much more.

Brisbane Airport has also added some special items, including a money-can't-buy behind-the-scenes tour of the airport, as well as one year of parking at the Domestic Terminal.

"Each year this auction gets bigger and bigger as more

passengers travel through the terminal," Brisbane Airport Head of Public Affairs Stephen Beckett said, explaining that some items are those passengers chose to leave due to exceeding their baggage limit.

"Know that we're not throwing this stuff out, it's not going to landfill, but the money is making a difference in the lives of Queensland children."

The online auction ends Sun 17 Dec - to bid, head over to [bne.com.au/auction](http://bne.com.au/auction). JM

## More cover in NZ

**COVER-MORE** Travel Insurance has released its Cover-More App to the New Zealand market, with the specialist digital travel tool now available in the country's Google Play stores.

The app, which draws on GPS tracking and intelligence input from security analysts to provide travel alerts & assistance access, is now on offer for Kiwi travellers after a successful launch of the service in the Australian market in 2021 (*TD* 13 Jan 2021).





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10% off 10 of our favourite tours

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Incentives applicable on every booking made 1 November-24 December, 2023. 15 places on Sicily - Jewel of the Mediterranean famil available in the prize draw, departing October 2024. Winners of the prize draw will be selected at random. Subject to change.



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