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1 – 31 OCTOBER 2023

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2023  
NOMINEE



## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features eight pages of the latest travel industry news, including a photo page from **Voyages** and our **Corporate Update** page, plus a front cover from **Norwegian Cruise Line** and full pages from **APT** and **A&K**.

## \$250m fine for Qantas?

**THE** head of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) Gina Cass-Gottlieb believes Qantas should be slugged \$250 million if it is found guilty of selling tickets on cancelled flights (**TD** 31 Aug).

Speaking this morning on Radio National, Cass-Gottlieb said a fine of this magnitude would serve as an appropriate warning “to deter conduct of this nature”, adding that currently Australian companies are “not sufficiently” disincentivised by penalties.

Releasing a statement in response to the legal action brought by the consumer watchdog yesterday, Qantas said it is important to bear in mind the “unprecedented upheaval” that the entire aviation sector was going through at the time of the allegations.

“It’s important to note that the period examined by the ACCC between May and Jul 2022... all airlines were experiencing

well-publicised issues from a very challenging restart, with ongoing border uncertainty, industry wide staff shortages and fleet availability causing a lot of disruption,” the carrier said.

“Qantas takes these allegations by the ACCC seriously.

“We have a long-standing approach to managing cancellations for flights, with a focus on providing customers with rebooking options or refunds, it’s a process that is consistent with common practice at many other airlines.”

**MEANWHILE**, following news yesterday that Qantas has ditched its expiry dates on pandemic-impacted flight credits, Air NZ CEO Greg Foran said his carrier “was not in the business” of holding onto flight credits, and if it needed to, the airline will extend the expiry date again.

Foran confirmed that while 80% of credits have been used, NZ\$200m is still outstanding.

## Walk for Wellness

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line (NCL) is calling on all travel professionals to participate in the return of its Walk for Wellness initiative, which will run throughout the month of Oct.


This year, the walking program will push for a world record - see the **front cover** for more details.

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**AIR CANADA**

**GET STARTED**

## TravelWorks inks Rapidbook

**RECENT** entrant into the Aussie market TravelWorks (**TD** 19 Jul) has formed a new partnership with Chrome extension Rapidbook to simplify the process for client invoicing and itinerary creation for travel agents and tour operators.

The free extension can now be integrated into the TravelWorks platform, which already boasts 12 suppliers, with the company hailing the latest agreement as a major benefit for time-poor travel advisors and operators who can transfer supplier invoices and itinerary data seamlessly.

TravelWorks is represented in the Australian market by Black Sheep Tourism after it brokered a deal with the brand's Canadian parent PcVoyages to offer its specialist accounting and back-office system services to the Australian travel trade.

Clients already signed up to TravelWorks include RoomRes,

Princess Cruises, Cover-More Insurance, & Globus.

The company's services include accounting, invoicing, reservation management, strategic and operations management.

### Match my charter

**FLIGHT** search and booking platform Mix & Match has introduced a private charter flight option thanks to a new partnership with Monarc Global.

The Sydney-based company has integrated Monarc Global's private charter booking widget, Travech, on its website, providing a wider range of travel options.

Travellers can now access the private charter booking widget on the Mix & Match site to explore an extensive selection of private jet and helicopter charter flights around Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific, plus a number of other markets.

## Solomons expands Air Vanuatu alliance

**SOLOMON** Airlines has announced it will deepen its partnership with Air Vanuatu from 30 Oct.

The carriers will increase frequency of the Port-Vila to Auckland flights to two Solomon Airlines-operated services weekly, expanding Air Vanuatu's New Zealand schedule to four return services weekly on the Port Vila to Auckland route.

Solomon Airlines will also operate two weekly return flights between Brisbane and Port Vila with connectivity via Port Vila to New Zealand.

The new services are timed to provide an extra weekend departure for leisure pax travelling from Australia to Vanuatu.

The announcement follows the airlines signing a wet lease agreement to align schedules (**TD** 27 Apr), as well as other updates earlier this week (**TD** 29 Aug).

**Travel Daily**  
ON LOCATION

**CHRISTCHURCH**

Today's issue of **TD** is coming to you from Christchurch NZ courtesy of TravelManagers.

**THE** 14th TravelManagers conference is now in full swing, with yesterday's plenary sessions followed by a trade show this morning, where the group's 80-plus suppliers showed off their wares.

Partnerships are key for TravelManagers, with the diverse interests and specialties of members reflected in the wide variety of preferred product on offer to delegates.

This afternoon everyone heads off for specially curated CHC sightseeing experiences, followed by a fun evening event at the Archie Brothers entertainment arcade.



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## Window Seat

**NICKY** Moorcraft, the normally highly energetic Head of Industry Sales at Cover-More Travel Insurance, was spotted taking a rare bit of downtime this morning in Christchurch, during preparations for the trade exhibition as part of the TravelManagers conference.

It had, after all, been perhaps a long morning already after the event's welcome function at the Christchurch Art Gallery, so who can blame her?

After helping her team pack a luggage cart from their hotel with all the show paraphernalia (**pictured**), Moorcraft became a bit of excess baggage as well as she enjoyed a ride to the venue.



## Canada issues US travel warning

**AUTHORITIES** in Canada have issued a new travel advisory warning its citizens about anti-LGBTQI+ legislation in several American states.

Global Affairs Canada urged LGBTQI+ travellers to be wary, noting "some states have enacted laws and policies that may affect LGBTQI+ travellers".

## Rex links ADL-BNE

**REX** Airlines has announced the carrier will begin daily direct flights between Adelaide and Brisbane from 30 Oct, offering special launch fares of only \$149 one way.

This is the third new route Rex has launched in the last three months and follows the additions of Adelaide-Sydney and Melbourne-Hobart to the domestic network.

## Mantra MEL refurb

**MANTRA** Melbourne Airport is set to undergo a multimillion dollar refurbishment, with the new-look property expected to be unveiled in 2024.

The former Mantra Tullamarine has been renamed "to provide greater clarity and make it easier for guests to identify the hotel's convenient location at the airport", with the project seeing remodelled guestrooms and restaurant areas.

Mantra Melbourne Airport offers a 24-hour airport shuttle.

## Mosman Travel wins again!



**THE** team from Link Travel Group member Mosman Travel can't wipe the smile off their faces after taking out the Business of the Year category in Sydney's North Shore Local Business Awards.

The agency was a finalist in the Outstanding Specialist Retail Business category and took that award out for the fourth time, but it was the first time Mosman Travel was named best business overall, against more than 20

other high-performing winners.

MD Sharyn Kitchener, **pictured** with Director Mike Goodall and the team, said it was a thrill to win after the challenging time the travel industry had been through.

"It's fantastic to see travel is now well and truly back, with increased demand in the past year," she said, thanking her team - all of whom remained with the business right through the pandemic - for their resilience and dedication.

Travel Daily

# The Chat


with Jenny






## A Conversation with Danielle Galloway

of Travel Associates

CLICK HERE to listen







## WE'D REALLY LOVE YOUR VOTE!

MSC Cruises is delighted and deeply honoured to be nominated in the NTIA 2023 Most Popular Ocean Cruise Category.

Your unwavering support has brought us this far, and we couldn't be more grateful!

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## River cruises building bridges



**AVALON** Waterways (AW) hosted a Q&A event featuring the cruise company's President Pam Hoffee and Aussie ambassador and TV presenter Melissa Doyle this week (pictured).

The event was held at the Aster restaurant, on the top floor of the InterContinental Sydney, with the spectacular views of Sydney Harbour echoing AW's famed Panorama suites, which boast wide floor-to-ceiling windows.

The AW team have had their

biggest quarter ever, beating out even 2019, with Hoffee flagging an increasing trend towards out-of-season bookings, longer trips and a move to a more active form of cruising for passengers.

Active cruisers aboard AW sailings can choose to ride a bike, visit a winery or just chill out in their cabin watching the world go by, or as Doyle joked, "deciding which castle I should live in for the rest of my life".

Hoffee also hinted that a new AW route was coming soon and that, while it is currently a secret, Aussies could probably work it out by looking at where they don't currently go to.

The AW chief also shared that the expansion of the company's Active & Discovery itineraries has led to an increase in younger Gen X travellers seeking out bookings and exploring more river cruise holidays, with Hoffee noting the trend would likely ensure its appeal for modern travellers in the years to come.

The cruise brand is anticipating European destinations will continue to be popular in 2024 - especially in France, which will be hosting the Olympics as well.

"Owing to the country's mix of both bigger and smaller waterways that appeal to travellers of all interests - think art lovers, foodies and history buffs alike," Hoffee said.

## Treehouse debut

**TREEHOUSE** Hotels is set to debut in Australia in 2026, with the opening of a 248-key property in Adelaide.

The hotel will form 10 levels of the mixed-use 39-storey tower within the city's \$400 million Market Square Development.

Guests will enjoy a restaurant and bar with outdoor seating, a street-front cafe showcasing local produce, more than 500m<sup>2</sup> of indoor and outdoor event space, in addition to more than 230m<sup>2</sup> of fitness and wellness facilities.

The "playful and fun" that "captures the nostalgia of childhood" brand is part of the luxury SH Hotels & Resorts group, which opened its first hotel in London in 2019, and has plans for more openings in Manchester, California, Miama and Riyadh.

## Digging in for TM trees



**THIS** select group of attendees at this week's TravelManagers conference in Christchurch kicked off proceedings in the great outdoors with a special tree planting activity.

Conducted in partnership with the Christchurch Foundation and sponsored by Intrepid, the small group of suppliers and head office staff got their hands dirty by collectively planting hundreds of trees.

The Christchurch Foundation is committed to "creating a greener, more liveable and sustainable future" for the city as it continues

to rebuild.

The tree planting event assisted in offsetting the carbon emissions of the conference, with tree planting seen as one of the most effective ways to tackle greenhouse gases because plants absorb carbon dioxide and convert carbon into biomass.

Trees were also a focus for some TravelManagers delegates today when they experienced the thrills of Christchurch Adventure Park (pictured below) via New Zealand's highest and longest zip lines, soaring through the spectacular local forest.



## Brazil delays rules

**THE** Brazilian Government has opted to postpone its flagged reinstatement of visa requirements for nationals of Australia to enter the country, with the latest 01 Oct date now kicked back to 10 Jan next year at the earliest.

The move to impose visa requirements, flagged earlier this year (TD 20 Mar), marks the first time in four years that Brazil has enforced visa restrictions on Aussie travellers, reversing the previous government's decision in 2019 to lift visa requirements.

## Perth hotel buy

**SEASONS** of Perth will undergo a major renovation and rebranding after being acquired by Ark Capital Partners.

The existing mid-scale hotel will be transformed into a "designed, market-leading lifestyle hotel befitting the vibrancy of Perth" next year, according to Ark Capital Partners MD & CEO Rahul Parrab.

The property features 120 spacious rooms and suites, an outdoor swimming pool, restaurant, bar, events and function spaces, as well as secure basement parking.



# Voyages raises the roof for Anangu

**VOYAGES** Indigenous Tourism Australia raised a record \$90,000 for the Anangu Communities Foundation at its 20th anniversary gala fundraising event held last week in Sydney - a stunning increase of 50% on last year's event.

Hosted by Voyages' CEO, Matt Cameron-Smith, the who's who of the Australian travel industry turned out to support the Foundation, which funds projects to empower the Anangu communities of central Australia. "We are so proud of the close connections we have with the Anangu - the traditional custodians of the land on which we operate at Uluru," said Cameron-Smith.

"Twenty years ago, Voyages created the Foundation with a special focus on education and economic outcomes as the most powerful way to build community capacity, and thanks to the generous support of our team, guests and corporate partners, we've now raised over \$3 million to help create a positive future for Anangu communities," he concluded.

The event saw competitive bidding for the silent and live auction prizes generously donated by Accor, Penfolds, Lion, Baillie Lodges, Jetstar, Breville, Journey Beyond, Hamilton Island and Holidays of Australia.



**JAMES** Hewlett, Collette; Karen Prideaux, Voyages; and Anthony Dennis, Nine.



**HARRY** Wilson, Matt Cameron-Smith, Rhoda Roberts AO and Peter Wilson.



**JOHN** Grant (Blanche) entertaining guests with his performance.



**GUESTS** enjoying the hospitality of Sofitel Wentworth Sydney.



**ACCOR** team members were strong supporters of the event.



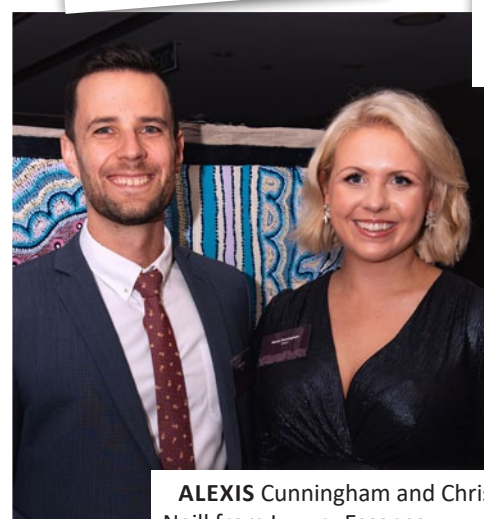
**THE** Tourism Australia team: Phil Lockyer, Nicole Mitchell and Bede Fennell with Auntie Margaret and Matt Cameron-Smith.



**ZALI** Steggall, MP and Kurt Schulte-Schrepping, Voyages.



**MARGY** Osmond, TTF; Bede Fennell, TA; Dana Ronan, Voyages Board Member; and Graham Moses, TTF.



**ALEXIS** Cunningham and Chris Neill from Luxury Escapes.



**ATTENDEES** were welcomed to the event by Yidaki performance.



## TravelManagers team all on board

**THIS** week's TravelManagers conference in Christchurch is welcoming guests from all over Australia - and beyond - including some of the company's Philippines-based team.

Members of TravelManagers' Manila-based operation, (pictured right with a couple of Aussie ring-ins including Joe Araullo and Michael Gazal), are an integral part of the organisation, managing all sorts of administrative functions including ticketing and accounting to ensure members of the group receive great service and assistance.

TravelManagers works hard to ensure the Philippines employees are part of the team, with regular in-person visits and constant communication, while inclusion in the group's annual conference is naturally a highlight.

These photos were taken last night during the event's Travel Corporation-sponsored welcome reception which was held at the Christchurch Art Gallery.



**NICK** Guthrey from ANZCRO with Delta's Nicole Bennett and Peter Ross from Qantas.



**HOUSE** of Travel Australia chief Joe Araullo with Sharon Hando from Virgin Voyages/Travel the World.



**SMILE!** You're in *Travel Daily!*



**MARLENE** Lane from TravelManagers with Elly Eves of Princess Cruises, Kirsty Bell-Jack from Cunard and TravelManagers COO Grant Campbell.



**BRIAN** Taylor and Halina Kubica from Greece and Mediterranean Travel Centre with PTM Vicki Hope.



**JEFF** Leckey, House of Travel with TravelManagers' Julia McLean and Troy Coelho.



**TRAVEL** Sapphire's Justin Smythe with Linda Seiersen of Collette, Abercrombie & Kent's Beth Ellicott and Martine Nunes of Oceania Cruises.



# Travel Daily

## CORPORATE UPDATE

### FCTG's big B2B bounce

**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group's (FCTG) Total Transaction Value continued to grow strongly in the full year to 30 Jun, with the B2B division of the company now fully staffed on the back of a broader geographical rollout of the FCM, Stage and Screen and Corporate Traveller brands.

Reflecting on the better-than-forecast rebound of its corporate business, FCTG's MD ANZ for Corporate, Melissa Elf, said new business acquired through

aggressive sales tactics had been a key lever in the results.

"Our global 'Grow to Win' strategy is full steam ahead in Australia and New Zealand and this has seen us continue to gain market share through high customer retention rates and a large volume of new account wins for both the SME sector and our large market pillars," she said.

"It has also been a record-breaking year for FCM regarding turnover, with a proud customer retention rate of 98% and winning major global clients such as Shell, and Wesfarmers closer to home... this has also been coupled by growth in the sporting, TV, movie, arts, culture, & music industries."

### Potts at Platinum

**RYAN** Potts has this week joined Platinum Travel Group as the corporate travel agency's new Head of Strategy and Partnerships.

Taking up the position after a nine-year tenure at CT Connections, including as its CEO for two-and-a-half years, Potts will be charged with refining and delivering on Platinum's current strategy, using his extensive knowledge of the SME space.

"Ryan will be instrumental in further refining and delivering on our strategy, and has the benefit of building on the incredible foundations our talented team have established," Platinum said.



### Hotel bills made easy

**CONFERMA** Pay has linked with Inlogik to launch a new solution for business travellers to simplify and automate the reconciliation of hotel expenses using cutting-edge virtual card technology.

Businesses implementing the new service will be able to have their employees' hotel invoices automatically tracked and transformed to be tax- and audit-ready, saving significant time and providing improved oversight and increased control over budgets.

"Drawing on our long-standing experience in the hotel and travel industries, this new system gives business what they need most - more time and better visibility," CEO Jason Lalor said.

Keep up to date with **Travel Daily** on the go



Travel Daily



### Hilton Garden Inn on full display



**HILTON** recently unveiled the new look for its Garden Inn brand at a roadshow held at the Royal Randwick Racecourse this week, refitting a shipping container as a fully decked-out room, for a truly immersive experience.

The prototype for its upscale focused service brand boasts features like a standing desk with an arty nature backdrop, perfect for those late-night work Zoom meetings, and the room also works well for business travellers.

The sofa converts easily into a pull-out bed (**pictured**) for families travelling with children and the backlit bathroom mirror ensures that those Instagram influencers can always look their best - at least to themselves.

Designed as a modular kit-of-parts that franchisees can easily select from to refit their rooms, the strategy avoids costs associated with designers, and the inevitable paralysis of choosing colours and fabrics.

Despite its value position, the

rooms look very swish.

There are currently Hilton Garden Inn properties in Australia in Albany and Darwin and another five are in the pipeline, including in Busselton, Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

"Owners have shared with us that they are drawn to Hilton Garden Inn for its efficient kit-of-parts prototype, tailored offerings, and greater flexibility with franchised and managed hotel agreement options," Senior Vice President, Development, APAC, Guy Phillips said.

"They also value the brand's ability to leverage Hilton's powerful commercial engine and its regionalisation approach for the Australasia market, all of which help ensure long-term success," he added.

The new prototype also takes into account Australian travellers' need for stays to be more sustainable, with Hilton noting that the latest display incorporates these insights.

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"Daydream Your Way" during the upcoming holidays at **Daydream Island Resort and Living Reef**. The resort is currently offering up to 15% off for stays of four nights or more, as well as 25% off ferry transfers and the choice of two bonuses including a \$100 gift store credit, extended 12pm check out, and more. Available for stays before 31 Oct for bookings made prior to 30 Sep - [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

**Viking** is offering a flight credit of up to \$2,500 per couple on its range of 2024 and 2025 ocean voyages, plus savings of up to \$4,600 per couple on its river voyages on all new bookings made before 30 Nov. The cruise line is also offering savings of up to \$2,000 per couple on expedition. Phone Viking on 138 747 for more details.

**Murray River Paddlesteamers** is offering savings of \$1,190 per couple and zero solo surcharge on select seven-night Murray River cruises in 2024/25 season when booked by 30 Sep. Valid for travel from 01 Apr 2024 through to 31 Mar 2025, the package includes onboard meals, daily shore excursions and experiences, and much more. [CLICK HERE](#) to book.

Ending on 30 Sep, **Emerald Cruises'** 2024 Europe Earlybird offers are still currently running live on the website. The itineraries include the 15-day Splendours of Europe travelling from Amsterdam to Budapest or vice versa with savings of up to \$2,500pp or an eight-day roundtrip with savings up to \$800pp. More offers are available [HERE](#).

**Cruise Traveller** is offering whopping savings of up to \$16,680 per couple and \$21,045 per person for solo travellers aboard Ponant's *Le Paul Gauguin* on its 2025 South Seas voyage from Fiji to Bali. Available for bookings made by 30 Sep, the three-week sailing traverses Fiji, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Indonesia. Call Cruise Traveller on 1800 507 77 for more.

Get free scuba diving sessions at **Holiday Inn Resort Kandooma Maldives** when you stay a minimum of three nights. The Dive Free @ Kandooma is available now for two single-tank group dives with two certified divers and free diving equipment per day of stay. Terms and conditions apply - [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more.

Get up to 15% off on over 400 tours departing in 2024 with **AAT Kings'** WildAwaits sale across Australia and New Zealand. Boasting fascinating encounters with wildlife on Kangaroo Island and breathtaking river scenery in the Kimberley, the tours are handpicked for keen explorers to embark on their journeys in 2024. Book by 31 Oct to get 15% off your itineraries [HERE](#).

## We need reform: ATEC

**KEY** factors continuing to adversely impact the recovery of international arrivals to Australia are high airfares and low capacity, the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) believes.

In a letter written this week to Federal Minister for Transport, Catherine King (**pictured**), the peak industry body representing Australia's tourism export market called for a reform of aviation rules, which it said "are currently dampening competition".

While not referencing Qantas specifically, the letter pointed to a need for international airlines to be allowed to add more capacity, an issue in the news this week after the Flying Kangaroo admitted during a Senate meeting that it had put its case forward to the Federal Government to block Qatar Airways from doubling its number of seats to Australia.

"By allowing more competition into Australia from international airlines, we are opening up the opportunity for job creation, higher export earnings, lower



airfares both into and out of Australia all thanks to an increase in international tourist arrivals," ATEC stated.

"In this post-COVID period, there are some clear winners - airlines are posting record profits - yet our ability to grow and service inbound visitors, who contribute significantly to our export earnings, is being curtailed by limited access of international carriers into Australia," the letter went on to say.

While the picture has been a little brighter for outbound travel, the pace of recovery for international holidaymakers coming to Australia continues to lag behind overseas averages.

## URBAN AIR MOBILITY IS NO FLY-BY-NIGHT FAD

The once-fanciful aerial transport is now within reach, and aerospace manufacturers are furiously working on getting the concept of Urban Air Mobility off the ground.

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travelBulletin



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Travel Daily

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Sydney - Thursday 19th October, 6pm, Art Gallery NSW

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