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## Scoot to Eurostar

TRAVEL agents can score themselves an e-scooter and a range of cash vouchers as part of a new Eurostar incentive launched by Rail Online.

Eligible bookings can be made through Rail Online for the high-speed European rail service between 03 Apr and 03 May.

The winning advisor with the highest value of sales will nab the \$1,000 scooter, while four cash vouchers ranging from \$100-\$500 will be handed out to top sellers.

## Use the power of green

MANY agents are missing the opportunity to lead their sales pitches with sustainability, Globus Family of Brands (GFOB) CMO, Steve Born, believes.

Speaking with *Travel Daily* aboard Avalon's new *Avalon Alegria* vessel in Portugal this week, Born said there is a great advantage to agents who put sustainability front and centre.

"Most consumers are very in tune with the idea that they should travel sustainably, but don't know what their actual choices are," Born said.

"If agents can participate in featuring their own sustainable



brands, they have the power of suggestion unlike any other force in travel.

"If they can lead with that, say 'here are your sustainable cruise options' [or] 'here are your sustainable land options', then they'd see a great opportunity with that."

Speaking with media on board, Avalon Waterways President, Pam Hoffee, also explained that the brand wants to be at the forefront of sustainable river cruising, but has conceded the business has let go of its goal of having a vessel without a fuel engine by 2027.

"We are not going to make that goal because the technology just doesn't exist," Hoffee shared.

"We have had to set that as a reality in our mind, we're not going to hit the 2027 goal for an all-electric ship, but for this ship, we were able to put in the greenest engine possible.

"This ship [*Alegria*] is the greenest ship on the Douro, because we chose to put in the best engine available, with the most fuel efficiency." AP

## JQ not included?

MORE details about Qantas' planned loyalty revamp have come to light, with an internal draft document obtained by the *AFR* suggesting the changes will go live from 01 Jul.

Qantas confirmed the update to *Travel Daily* last month (*TD* 18 Mar), which will likely include a new loyalty tier.

Reports this morning regarding the internal draft indicate the loyalty rethink will not be extended to Jetstar, and may also see Qantas flights able to be refunded for 6,000 points.

The carrier was not available to comment on the loyalty draft.

Qantas' frequent flyer scheme has around 15 million members after growing its stocks from 14.1 million in 2022.

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of the latest news including our **Luxury** page.

## NZ on the rails

SIX New Zealand itineraries have been added to Railbookers' portfolio, marking a return to the Kiwi market for the rail operator.

Trips range from eight to 16 days in length and explore both islands of New Zealand.

Destinations included in the itineraries are Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Queenstown and Franz Josef.

To promote the expansion, travellers can access a discount of up to \$800 per couple.

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**Travel Daily**  
ON LOCATION

**PORTO**

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Avalon Waterways, who are hosting us on an inaugural cruise aboard *Avalon Alegria*.

OUR time aboard *Avalon Alegria* wraps up today following a special farewell dinner with live music last night. As we head home, *Alegria* will continue taking guests along the Douro river in relaxed luxury on the eight-day 'Vida Portugal: Vineyards & Villages along the Douro' itinerary. Built specifically to sail the Douro river, *Avalon Alegria* is an incredible way to experience the region's timeless traditions, culinary delights, rich wine culture and stunning vistas.

## Time for awesome Mawson

AURORA Expeditions has announced plans to add a third purpose-built small expedition ship to its fleet, with *Douglas Mawson* scheduled to join the Australian company's vessel line-up from late next year (CW breaking news).

Features of the upcoming 154-pax ship include two restaurants, two bars, an outdoor heated swimming pool, jacuzzis, a gym and sauna, as well as relaxation and wellness areas.

In terms of accommodation, cabins have been inspired by Nordic interior features across 11 different categories, most featuring private balconies.

For the first time, Aurora's latest ship will also offer several single berth cabins to cater for the growing solo traveller segment.

Meanwhile on the technology front, *Mawson* will boast a Ulstein X-BOW design for smoother and more economical sailing in



rough ocean environments, with faster crossings and better fuel efficiency also added benefits.

*Mawson's* inaugural season will mark Aurora's return to east Antarctica for the first time in 15 years, offering itineraries such as 'Mawson's Antarctica' voyage in honour of the vessel's namesake, departing from Hobart.

Pre-registered interest lodged for the inaugural Antarctica 2025/2026 season before 18 Apr 2024 will be eligible for US\$2,000 per couple discounts.

Aussies may also recognise the explorer Douglas Mawson's face from the old \$100 bill before it was replaced in 1996.

More Aurora news on p3.

**Travel Daily**  
ON LOCATION

**FIJI**

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line, which is hosting us on an Easter cruise aboard *Norwegian Spirit*.

TODAY we disembark *Norwegian Spirit* in Fiji, where the ship's guests will partake in the last Beach Clean Up of the season in Latuoka. *Spirit's* guests will be joined by representatives from Take 3 for the Sea, as they help do their bit for the environment and further the ethos of conservation. The ship will follow up her call in Lautoka with another Fijian port, Dravuni Island, before she rounds out her cruise visiting a number of destinations in French Polynesia.

**NEW CALEDONIA**

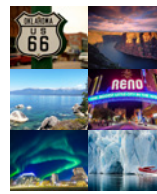
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## Top End Indigenous push

THE NT Government has combined with the Federal Government to inject a further \$6 million in funding to deliver more Indigenous tourism projects.

The chief aim of the cash splash will be to diversify Aboriginal tourism products and

experiences for both domestic and international visitors.

Among the projects already identified for funding include a tailored Aboriginal cultural tourism entrepreneurs accelerator program, which will collaborate with Indigenous Business Australia to foster greater innovation, business skills, and industry networks.

The development of an Aboriginal cultural tourism framework and toolkit has also been flagged, alongside an extra \$2 million for the Aboriginal Tourism Grant Program.

The latest grant will help the Program activate more bookable Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences, as well as help the product development phase to make NT experiences stand out from the crowd. *AB*

### Time to Rocky 'n' roll

ROCKY Mountaineer has released a new package which combines its 'Rockies to the Red Rocks' journey with the Moab Music Festival in Utah.

Setting off from Denver, the festival package includes tickets to the event and explorations of the Arches and Canyonlands National Parks.

While at the Moab Music Festival, travellers can enjoy a Grotto Concert in Canyonlands National Park, a special musical hike, and a floating concert on the Colorado River.

## Just paddle B Corp you can



**IN CELEBRATION** of B Corp Month which ran throughout Mar, Aurora Expeditions' sales team recently hosted Sydney and Melbourne travel agents on a day out in nature.

The cruise line's BDM, Alexandra Fayan, and Sales Director APAC, Steve McLaughlin, took a group of 18 Sydney-based agents on a "mini expedition" paddle to Reef Beach in the Northern Beaches.

The group then enjoyed a nature walk with a local guide before taking a break from the all the adventuring with an afternoon of food, beer tasting and a talk at fellow B Corp, 4 Pines Brewing.

Meanwhile in Melbourne, 13 industry partners joined BDM, Travis Graham, for a paddle from the University of Melbourne Boat House through Melbourne's CBD and back.

Afterwards, the group headed to Brick Lane Brewery, another B Corp business, to mingle over canapes and drinks.

The Sydney group included agents from Travel Associates Balgowlah; Jamison Plaza Travel Associates; Frontier Travel, Travel and Cruise Belrose; Luxe by iTravel; Evans & Turner Travel Associates; Savenio; The Savvy Traveller; Chimu Adventures; and Flight Centre Birkenhead Point Cruise Express.

Making up the Melbourne group were advisors from Skye Travel; MTA Travel; My Cruise Concierge; Travel Project; The Travel Specialists; Travel Associates; Flight Centre Travel Right; Emma Whiting Travel; Cruise Traveller; and Travel Partners. *JM*

**Pictured:** The Melbourne group having a splashing good time on the Yarra River.

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### True North refits

**AUSTRALIAN** expedition cruise line True North has completed a major makeover of both its small ships, *True North* and *True North II*, as the operator prepares for voyages this year of Australia, Indonesia & Papua New Guinea.

One of the biggest changes is to *True North*, which now boasts Ocean Premium Cabin class in response to pax seeking more “flexible and adaptable” rooms.

The new class offers guests the choice of a twin share or double bed layout when booking, and while the line prides itself on adventures outside of its ships’ cabins, True North Director, Chad Avenell, said it was also key to provide the most relaxing environment possible on board.

Key selling points for True North include going to remote destinations that few other operators can reach, as well as snorkelling adventures, fishing and its popular helicopter picnic experience - more details [HERE](#).

### Collette and canyons

**COLLETTE** has launched a new classic experiences tour exploring Arizona and Utah in the US.

The eight-day adventure kicks off in Scottsdale, Arizona before heading on to Sedona to check out the area’s red rocks and valleys, before journeying on to the Kaibab National Forrest.

Departures for the ‘Canyon Country’ tour start from 28 Jun, with prices leading in from \$4,549 ppts & \$5,649 for solo travellers.

### Firefighters to strike

**AVIATION** firefighters are likely to strike at 22 airports around the country on 15 Apr after union claims that a shortage of aviation fire and rescue firefighters is putting air passengers at risk.

The planned work stoppage is due to run for four hours from 6am, and includes the major hubs of Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, as well as a host of regional ports.

**TOP-SELLING** agents from Travellers Choice were recently given the opportunity to explore Rotorua on New Zealand’s North Island over four memorable days.

Hosted by New Zealand wholesale specialist ANZCRO, the jam-packed itinerary included a steamy soak in the geothermal pools at Waiotapua, flying through the forest with Off Road NZ, and traversing high-altitude swing bridges with Canopy Tours.

The group also enjoyed a pontoon vessel ride on Lake Rotoiti, experienced local Maori culture at Te Pa Tu (‘The Gathering Place’) and relaxed at the Wai Ariki (‘chiefly waters’) Hot Springs & Spa, where they were treated to traditional Ngati Whakaue healing practices.

The agents were among the first

to stay at the luxurious five-star Hana Lodge, which is surrounded by a lush 15-acre park.

“We were thrilled to witness the agents’ love for Rotorua blossom as they immersed themselves in our culture, experienced our renowned manaakitanga (hospitality), and wholeheartedly embraced the plethora of activities and sights our city has to offer,” RotoruaNZ International Manager Lou Baddiley said.

All of the agents taking part in the journey were recipients of Travellers Choice’s annual Choice Awards, and will also embark on trips to Vietnam and the Maldives over the coming months. *JM*

**Pictured:** Fittingly, the group indulges in Champagne alongside Champagne Lake at the Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland.

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### Versace Macau opens

**THE** impressive Palazzo Versace Macau has opened its doors to guests, with the premium property featuring 271 rooms spread across three towers and 12 levels.

Representing the brand's inaugural resort venture in Asia, the Chinese hotel blends classical baroque and ancient Greek architectural influences with Chinese symbols, including chrysanthemums & dragons.

The resort offers indoor and outdoor swimming facilities, a spa equipped with a crystal steam room, a gym offering personal training services, and two Italian restaurants.

The Macau hotel will join the Italian brand's Dubai property in the portfolio, and follows a branded Palazzo Versace property on the Gold Coast failing to extend an agreement in the middle of last year.

The GC property was popular with celebrities at one stage, with high-profile guests including Beyonce, Paris Hilton, Jennifer Lopez, Rod Stewart and U2.



### RSSC UNVEILS EXPLORER-CLASS WORLD CRUISE

**REGENT** Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has revealed its 2027 World Cruise will take place aboard *Seven Seas Splendor* for the first time.

Departing on 11 Jan 2027 from Miami to New York on an amazing 140-night voyage, the cruise line has confirmed the luxury sailing will incorporate 71 ports of call in the Caribbean, the Pacific Islands, Australia, Asia, Africa and Europe.

Guests will have the opportunity to travel the full 35,668 nautical miles across three oceans, exploring 40 countries and choosing from 480 included shore excursions and 14 overnight stays.

While RSSC is no stranger to offering evolving world cruises, 2027 will represent a watershed year for the company, as its hosts the premium voyage on board one of its Explorer-class vessels for the first time.



The cruise line's President, Andrea DeMarco, said the itinerary for its latest world cruise was created using feedback from previous guests, many of whom said they were after even more immersion on future trips.

"We have seen continued interest and demand to venture further afield, for longer durations and so we are thrilled to announce that our 2027 World Cruise will take place on board *Seven Seas Splendor*, offering

more luxury travellers the opportunity to enjoy this once-in-a-lifetime experience," she said.

The 2027 around-the-world sailing will also be the first time that guests can sail in the most exclusive Regent Suite.

RSSC defines the unique suite accommodation as "the epitome of luxury on the high seas", priced at \$2.5 million for two guests.

The 2027 World Cruise goes on sale on 11 Apr, with pre-registration available **HERE**. AB

### Treyam to bridge land and sea in unprecedented luxury style in Neom

**SPECTACULAR** desert landscapes will meet the sea in Saudi Arabia's newly-unveiled 250-room luxury Treyam resort.

Part of the country's ambitious Neom development in the northwest region of Saudi Arabia and billed as its "premier lagoon destination", the slated property will boast a 450-metre rooftop infinity pool 36 metres above the ground.

Neom's board of directors said the resort will stand as a luxury

gateway for premium travellers seeking to combine luxury with active lifestyles.

Bridge-like architecture connects the northern and southern shores of the resort site, creating a sunset-like illusion from a distance, while upper and lower floors will offer guests panoramic views of the tidal lagoon below.

Treyam will attempt to lead the world in adventurous leisure pursuits as well, offering



a variety of activities such as sailing, water sports, in addition to land-based options.

Guests will also be able to take advantage of "technology-enhanced" fitness amenities.

No opening date has been confirmed for the resort.



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## ACCOMMODATION

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**Adina Apartment Hotel Sydney Town Hall** is set to undergo a multi-million dollar refurbishment this month. The full-scale renovation will "leave no area untouched", with upgraded guestrooms to feature amenities associated with long-stay apartments. New lighting and revitalised bathrooms will also be added. Guests checking in by the end of the year will also see more trees, seats, lighting and integrated public art to celebrate the area's heritage.



**Grand Millennium Auckland** has unveiled its newest ballroom transformation, including the installation of an 11.5m LED wall. Attendees can now enjoy the updated interior and take in new artistic lighting on the ceiling, which is meticulously crafted by using more than a million hand-assembled LED lights throughout the 1,000-person venue. The 830m<sup>2</sup> space can now also be separated into four sections for smaller events, adding greater flexibility.



The second phase of the US\$100 million investment project at **The Boca Raton** in Florida has been announced. A new iconic Beach Club will welcome visitors to the property at the beginning of next year. The exclusive venue will feature up to 207 rooms and suites, many connected with expansive poolside spaces that are easily accessible. Guests can also look forward to new fitness facilities, restaurants, bars, and a new cafe.



**Tierra Atacama Hotel & Spa** in Chile will be closed for the remainder of the year to undergo a thorough upgrade of the property's interiors. The US\$12 million renovation of the 28-key lodge resort, which will be unveiled in 2025, will extensively transform the hotel's interiors, with new furniture throughout and the debut of eight new suites.



A historic riverside diner has reopened its doors to welcome guests once again nearby from **Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok**, after almost five decades of hiatus. The aristocratic venue, located next to The Oriental Spa and across from the hotel, will operate under the helm of a new head chef, Pom Phatchara, to produce long-forgotten Thai dishes as she adds her contemporary flair.

## SIA marks 40 in ADL

**SINGAPORE** Airlines celebrated four decades of flying to and from Adelaide on Sun, making it the airport's longest-serving international airline.

From Oct, the carrier will increase its weekly frequencies on the Adelaide-Singapore route from seven to 10, generating an estimated \$96 million for the South Australia economy a year.

ADL MD, Brenton Cox, said SIA "has been an incredible supporter of the Adelaide market".

## Accor's Japan portfolio doubles

**ACCOR** managed to double its hotel presence in Japan in just once day, with the accommodation giant opening 22 hotels in the country on 01 Apr.

The move has seen Accor increase the number of rooms on offer to guests in Japan by 6,000, comprised of 12 Grand Mercure and 10 Mercure hotels situated in off-the-beaten-path sites.

Mercure properties range in location from the northernmost prefecture of Hokkaido, to the southernmost prefecture of Okinawa, with most located close by to popular attractions like Cape Zanpa in Okinawa, Asuka village in Nara, and Shiroi Koibito Park in Hokkaido.

"Popular destinations such as Tokyo and Osaka will always remain in high demand, but if you want to truly immerse yourself in the authentic culture of a country, sometimes you need to escape the big cities," Accor said.

Mercure Hotels & Resorts positions itself within the mid-scale segment, focusing on local neighbourhood treasures.



## Window Seat

**HERE** is a story that may restore some much-needed hope to the numerous Australian travellers over the years who have lost expensive items while on holiday.

Enter South African-born traveller Frits Butler, who has made headlines this week for being reunited with his iPad more than a decade after having it stolen from him while trekking around Paris.

Taking to social media, a jubilant Butler said he first thought the call to say it had been recovered was a scam.

"A woman called me several times and I only answered the 'scam' call the next day when she told me my cell number and address were on the iPad and photos that I travelled in Europe in 2014," he posted.

Only then did the once-unlucky tourist realise that it was his iPad that was stolen from his backpack in Paris.

Even stranger was the fact that the woman calling works in Bloubergstrand, about one kilometre from where he lives.

While receiving a lost iPad is clearly good news, one that is 10 years old takes some of the sheen off the recovery.

Let's be honest, with the fast pace of Apple technology, it might as well be a Blackberry.

