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A Big Red purchase

BIG Red Group has acquired its joint-venture partner Destination Cairns Marketing (DCM).

The purchase of the remaining 50% was made by mutual agreement following two years of collaboration.

Under the new structure, DCM will retain ownership and management of its tour desk operations in North Qld with The Local Agent management team also remaining intact with the addition of new team members.

WSI eyes int'l carriers

THE CEO of Western Sydney Airport is confident that its 24/7 appeal will attract a range of new international carriers.

Speaking at the Lights On Western Sydney event this morning, the upcoming hub's chief, Simon Hickey, said that having an airport that operates around the clock will connect all of Sydney to the world in a much more seamless way.

"This will then make a lot more sense to airlines which can then connect to all of that extra traffic and...that will form part of them building their business cases," Hickey contended.

Access to and from Europe will also be much easier for Aussie travellers and overseas arrivals, who will be able to skip many of the existing connecting flight delays associated with adhering to Sydney Airport's curfew.

To avoid getting left behind, Hickey suggested Sydney needs to compete with Melbourne and Brisbane, which already offer 24/7 operations and are growing capacity through new development.

WSI is aiming for 10 million passengers annually by 2031 and 82 million by 2063.

MEANWHILE, close to 50 domestic flights have already been cancelled at Sydney Airport this morning and that number is expected to rise throughout the day as the country's largest air hub is lashed by heavy rain.

In a statement to media, Sydney Airport encouraged passengers to check with their airline regarding the status of their flights.

SYD told **Travel Daily** that all runways remain open. **AB**

A&K goes in-depth

LEARN about Abercrombie & Kent's small group luxury tours that average the intimate size of only 13 guests per trip.

In the spotlight this week is the operator's 'Classic Japan journey, 'Taj Mahal & Treasures of India', and 'Botswana Safari in Style'.

Resident expert tour guides offer an in-depth understanding of cultures that will ensure an unforgettable journey.

See **page seven** for further info on tours departing soon.

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ATG CONNECT

Sell USA your way

PLACES on five families to the USA are up for grabs via a new 'Sell your way to the USA' agent incentive - more information available on **p8**.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news including our **Corporate Update**, a photo page from **Viking**, plus full pages from:

- Abercrombie & Kent
- Canuckiwi

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QF ticked for Fiji

THE International Air Services Commission has issued a renewal Determination which allocates unlimited passenger capacity to Qantas on flights between Australia and Fiji.

The decision also allows Jetstar to utilise the Fiji capacity.

Skal Melbourne elects Prez



HIGH-PROFILE travel executive recruiter Richard Kellaway (pictured) has been appointed to the role of President of the Skal Club of Melbourne.

The new leader was elected at the club's latest Annual General Meeting, and will see Tara Strickland step back from the role after a five-year tenure.

Under her watch, Skal Club of Melbourne was awarded with both the International and National Skal Club of the Year honours, with Kellaway aware he has a big legacy to follow.

"I have watched the Club blossom under President Tara Strickland to become a diverse, inclusive, and most importantly, a critical vehicle for bringing industry sectors together," Kellaway said.

"I can't wait to continue her legacy and the work of all her predecessors," he added.

Kellaway is currently the founder of recruitment firm Kellaway People and was previously with CRC Travel Jobs.

Alongside Kellaway is a newly elected Committee for 2024, which includes: Vice President Alex Dugdale; Secretary Aida Osta; Treasurer Erik van Velden; Membership Development Officer Sharyn Van der Veecken; General Committee Member Craig Hunt; and General Committee Member Joanne Keown.

An official handover ceremony of the presidential chains will be held at a special event taking place on 09 May at the Stamford Plaza Melbourne.

The guest speaker will be Dougal Hollis from Accommodation Australia.

Tickets to attend are \$55 for members and \$70 for guests.

CLICK HERE to purchase or find out more information. *AB*

G'day discounts

G'DAY Group is offering Aussie travel partners discounted stays at its Discovery Resorts, with special rates from \$180 a night.

The company is also offering trade discounts at its premium El Questro Homestead for only \$1,000 a night - email [HERE](#).

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Qantas NZ savings

QANTAS has launched discounted fares to Auckland, Christchurch, Queenstown, and Wellington, with economy tickets starting from \$549 return.

The deals are available from most Australian capital cities for travel periods between Apr 2024 and Feb 2025.

Sale fares are available until 11.59pm (AEST) on 11 Apr, unless sold out prior.

SYD still making loss

DESPITE a surge in earnings over the last 12 months, Sydney Airport still reported a loss of \$588 million, exacerbated by higher finance costs combined with depreciation expenses.

Figures revealed by the *AFR* indicate that earnings have more than doubled to \$1.22 billion in 2023 compared to 2022, as aviation links to the Harbour City continue to bounce back strongly from the pandemic.

The lion's share of revenue was sourced from aeronautical fees, shop and car rentals, as well as property leases and parking fees - all of which spiked in the 12 months to Dec 2023.

While the close-to \$600 million loss is not ideal, the result is significantly better than the \$943 million loss recorded in the previous period, which covered Oct 2021 to Dec 2022.

After being purchased by Sydney Aviation Alliance for \$23.6 billion in 2021 (*TD* 08 Nov 2021), the financial performance of Australia's largest airport has been more opaque than it was when it was previously listed on the ASX.

The Sydney Aviation Alliance consortium is made up of several investment funds, including AustralianSuper and QSuper.



Princess shows the love



PRINCESS Cruises treated the travel agent winners of its earlybird incentive to a four-night 'Tasmanian Seacation' on board *Majestic Princess* last month.

The luxurious cruise departed from Sydney on 14 Mar to make its way to Tasmania, with agents and an accompanying guest rewarded with a twin-share Balcony stateroom.

The group also enjoyed the Princess Plus Package, which includes unlimited wi-fi, beverages, premium desserts, fitness classes, casual dining and OceanNow delivery.

The incentive prize also included a one-night stay at the Shangri-La, an exclusive private group dinner at the QT hotel, and a \$400 EzAir credit for those flying into Sydney.

"After a busy 2023/24 cruise season Down Under, this was also a great chance to say a big thank you to the agents who work tirelessly to share the Princess experience and promote our world-class brand," said a spokesperson for Princess. *JM*

Pictured: Rachaelle Tyrrell, NSW State Manager for Princess Cruises; Paul Rowley, Flight Centre Mt Druitt; Julian De Carlo, Trade Marketing Executive at Princess Cruises; Elise Hornsby, Flight Centre; Nicole Young, Helloworld Burpengary.

That's my M Moment

MALLERY has launched a new global branding campaign called 'That's my M Moment'.

The boutique hotel collection hopes its latest marketing push will communicate the unique and exclusive experiences on offer at each of its properties, with individual hotels reflecting the history of its location.

This year will also be a milestone period for MGallery's expansion plans, with a new property opening in Kenya in Jun, as well as France, Poland and Mexico later in the year.

MGallery is also gearing up to open five additional hotels in China over the coming months, doubling the brand's portfolio in the country from five to 10 by the end of the year.



From ocean to pool deck.
MGallery Hotel Collection Sydney - Australia.
MALLERY
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Window Seat

A MAN has been charged and fined after he was caught urinating in a cup on an Air New Zealand flight in full view of fellow passengers.

The 53-year-old passenger was removed from a flight from Auckland at Sydney Airport in Dec for the indecent act, with the Australian Federal Police later charging the man with "acting in an offensive or disorderly manner affecting safety".

This week, the case was heard in the Downing Centre Local Court, with the judge in the matter handing down a \$600 fine.

Speaking with New Zealand media, a mother and daughter who were unlucky to be the pair sitting next to the offender revealed they were left "humiliated" by the act.

"We heard him do it [urinate] and there was no mistaking what the sound was and I just looked straight at my daughter and my daughter looked straight at me - it was very obvious what was happening," the mother named Holly said.

La Vie in Vientiane

LA VIE Hotels & Resorts has announced plans to open Laos' first Radisson RED hotel in the nation's capital Vientiane.

To be launched in partnership with the property's owners TK Group Co, LA Vie said its latest property would leverage the "unprecedented tourism growth" taking place in Laos.

Doors will open to the public in Q4 this year, and offer guests a wide range of amenities including a collection of pool access rooms, a pool bar, a restaurant and fitness centre.

Events planners will also benefit from large conference spaces, including two ballrooms.

Record attendance across Viking roadshows

VIKING welcomed thousands of attendees at their recent Explorer Sessions held in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and the Gold Coast.

These events saw record levels of attendance, with over 4,000 guests attending over 72 individual sessions throughout February and March. An increasing number of travel agent partners also attended with their clients this year to learn about travelling with Viking, find inspiration for their next voyage and discover more about Viking's award-winning river, ocean, and expedition journeys across seven continents.

Sales from these events exceeded targets, with participating agents also delighted to report numerous Viking sales post attendance.



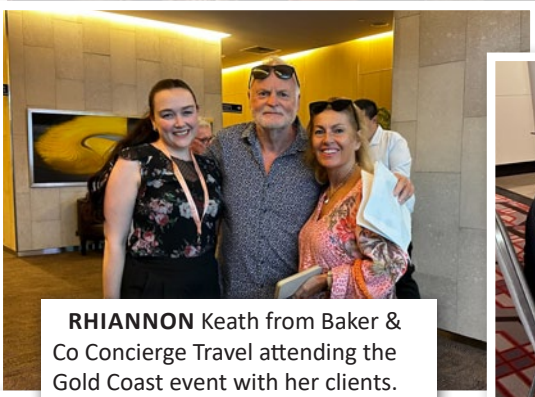
THE Gold Coast Explorer session.



THE Viking team at The Ritz-Carlton in Melbourne.



TEAM Viking on a road-trip from Brisbane to the Gold Coast.



RHIANNON Keath from Baker & Co Concierge Travel attending the Gold Coast event with her clients.



YASEMIN Coskun from Viking helping guests plan their next Viking voyage.



GUESTS are treated to a morning tea before learning about the world of Viking.



CORPORATE UPDATE

Globalstar + AirGateway

GLOBALSTAR Travel Management has announced a partnership with air travel distribution facilitator AirGateway, which provides the TMC with access to NDC and LCC air content.

The travel management company's partners will now be able to access the Agent Desktop tool BookingPad.

AirGateway enables full access and end-to-end servicing of NDC content for almost 30 airlines under the agency's IATA/BSP, as well as low-cost and consolidated content.

The AirGateway platform provides a single interface to shop, book, issue, and fully service NDC airlines, with the bookings automatically reporting through to GlobalStars' mid/back office to help standardise billing and reporting.

CWT grows in China

CWT has expanded its central payment solution in China to cover hotel bookings.

The business travel provider's Chinese customers can now book, pay, and reconcile travel expenses for flights, hotels, and rail tickets from a central account.

Central payments can help increase traveller satisfaction, improve travel policy compliance, and save time and effort on expense reconciliation, CWT said.

The payment solution was developed alongside AirPlus.

Globalstar Executive Director IT & Supplier Relations, Julian Russell, described the deal as a positive step toward providing its partners with greater choice.

"AirGateway's platform allows our partners to bypass additional surcharges, while also providing a consistent workflow and full servicing capabilities to clients across a broad range of carriers," Russell said. *MS*

CX design video

CATHAY Pacific is taking passengers behind the scenes on its new business class Aria Suites and its new premium economy cabins with a new video ([HERE](#)).

The thinking behind the design of the Aria Suites was knowing pax want more than a comfortable seat.

"They want a space to be enjoyed without interruptions, including sliding privacy doors and everything they need at their fingertips," Cathay said.

"In premium economy, passenger experience was the main consideration inspiring every element of privacy, storage, and lighting."




Outrigger showcases in Oz



THE Outrigger Hospitality Group has wrapped up its global showcase series, which featured events and appointments in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney over 19-21 Mar.

Attendees heard all about the company's latest developments and its upcoming phase of growth from Outrigger's executives as well as hotel representatives from Hawaii, Fiji, Thailand, Mauritius and the Maldives.

The 25-strong delegation was led by President and Chief Executive Jeff Wagoner, who discussed key updates, including Outrigger's recent Australian expansion ambitions (*TD* 25 Mar).

Among the attendees were key wholesalers, product managers, specialist travel agents, tourism industry associates, airlines, and travel and lifestyle media, some of whom were lucky enough to win some great door prizes. *JM*

Pictured: Melbourne Showcase attendees at the River's Edge, World Trade Centre.

Expedia gets NDC

AMADEUS has expanded a strategic partnership with Expedia Group this week, with the travel tech company to deploy New Distribution Capability (NDC) capability for the OTA.

"Renewing our partnership with Amadeus and integrating its aggregated NDC content to our connectivity portfolio marks a significant step forward in our collaboration," Expedia's VP, Global Connectivity & Partner Solutions, Chris Hodges, said.

"This move further emphasises our commitment to offering travellers the widest range of choices and personalised experiences, in line with the industry's ongoing embrace of NDC technology," he added.

NDC allows airlines to tailor offers using the latest merchandising techniques, and to present and distribute them in a way that enhances the shopping experience for travel sellers.



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Viking is inviting travellers to "discover more" on a river voyage by offering savings of up to \$4,600 per couple on 2024, 2025 and 2026 river journeys booked before 31 May this year. That means the Viking 15-day 'Grand European Tour' from Budapest to Amsterdam or vice versa in a Standard Stateroom is now priced at \$6,395 per person. For more information, contact Viking on 138 747 (AU) or 0800 447 913 (New Zealand), or click [HERE](#).

Experience luxury cruise ship *Crystal Symphony* in Europe with savings of \$2,625 if booked by 30 Apr thanks to the new rail, sail and stay package. The special is available through **Cruise Traveller** with the savings available per person, twin-share, on a six-night, five-star, 'Crystal Ports and Vintage Rail of Europe' trip that starts on 02 Nov 2024. Three nights in a boutique, luxury hotel in Rome and an evening tour of the 'Eternal City' are included. Call 1800 507 777.

Contiki is letting travellers stack the savings, offering 25% off with its Europe sales plus 5% off per person when booking with three or more friends, and another 5% discount on two or more trips. A variety of trips are on offer including the 12-day 'European Discovery' that includes everything from the German beer halls to the canals of Amsterdam, the 11-day premium Greek island hopping experience and a 10-day tour of Scandinavian highlights. Contiki is also offering the opportunity to book today with just a \$200 deposit. Bookings must be made by 30 Apr. For more information call 1300 172 967 or click [HERE](#).

TFE Hotels (Adina, Vibe, Travelodge and more) is offering discounts of up to 30% on stays in Australia and its global portfolio of hotels. There are 80 hotels in 11 countries that allow travellers to benefit from the discount and TFE Hotel eClub subscribers will also gain an additional 10% off on top of that. The deal is for stays starting now until 16 Apr so be quick to benefit. Book [HERE](#).

Hit the rails and save up to \$800 thanks to **Railbookers** which is offering discounts of \$600 per couple on any seven-night rail holidays, \$700 per couple on any 10-14-night rail holidays, or \$800 per couple on any 15+ night rail holidays. Solo travellers can save \$300 per person on any seven-night rail holidays, \$350 per person on any 10-14-night rail holidays, or \$400 per person on any 15+ night rail holidays. Trips include but are not limited to destinations such as Canada, Switzerland and Australia. New reservations only. Call 1300 938 534 for more details.

Get in early to save with **Intrepid** thanks to earlybird offers on popular adventures including Antarctica. For example, save up to 20% off the 11-day 'Best of Antarctica Wildlife Explorer', sailing on *Ocean Endeavour*. The discount applies to new bookings made from 15 Mar to 30 Apr 2024 for all Intrepid Travel's Antarctica Ocean Endeavour departures between 30 Oct 2024 – 30 Mar 2025. Click [HERE](#) for more.

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NCL, Take 3 take on Fiji



NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) and environmental organisation Take 3 for the Sea hosted their first international Beach Clean Up shore excursion at Wailoaloa in Fiji earlier this week.

The inaugural international Clean Up, which was attended by more than 80 participants wrapped up the successful second season of the partnership between the two.

Around 50 passengers were joined by **Travel Daily**, as well as NCL employees, and volunteers from Ramada, Smugglers Cove, Althia Tours, Mamanuca Environment Centre, and even the Nadi Police Station.

The group collected more than 500kg of rubbish, which included 180kg of tyres, loads of large glass bottles, almost 500 plastic bottles, 242 aluminium cans, 47 shoes, and 851 pieces of plastic and remnants.

Pictured are the Tourism Fiji and Take 3 for the Sea teams doing their bit for conservation. *MS*

Long-haul tastes

AIR New Zealand has formally introduced its refreshed long-haul menu aboard its flights, offering passengers a contemporary cuisine focusing on the country's finest regional produce.

The latest menu delivers a nod to iconic Kiwi favourites such as confit potato with onion creme fraiche whip and chives, a twist on chips and dip, and ambrosia ice cream with raspberry frozen yoghurt, milk chocolate shards, and sour cherry swirls.

"Our menu is different depending on where you fly and we change our long-haul menu twice a year, so there are lots of opportunities for customers to enjoy new and exciting dishes no matter how frequently they travel with us," the carrier said.

The new meal additions can be identified by a distinctive icon, ensuring passengers can easily identify the featured dishes and savour the unique flavours.

Abercrombie & Kent

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