



Love what you do  
Earn what you deserve

Earn up to 95% commission with TravelManagers

Find out more

TravelManagers  
As individual as you are  
Join.travelmanagers.com.au

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features five pages of the latest news including our **Sustainability** page, plus full pages from:

- AAT Kings
- Eva Airways

## Ormina in Portugal

**ORMINA** Tours will run a free educational webinar on Portugal for travel agents on 23 May.

The session will provide insider tips to better craft itineraries for clients - register **HERE** to attend.

Ormina is also providing access to a free 12-page 'Portugal Sales Guide', available to access **HERE**.

## AAT Top End savings

**TRAVELLERS** can currently save up to 15% on selected guided holidays operated by AAT Kings in the Top End.

Tour highlights include visits to the Kakadu National Park, the Tiwi Islands, and Earth Sanctuary. More details on **page six**.

## AA ticks Aeronology on NDC

**AMERICAN** Airlines (AA) has certified Melbourne-based travel tech specialist Aeronology to provide access to the carrier's group content via an NDC-enabled interface.

The deal was flagged by *Travel Daily* in Dec last year (*TD* 06 Dec 2023), and will see travel sellers able to access a wider range of fares and ancillary services.

Aeronology said creating a full-service capability for NDC sets "a new standard" in airline distribution, with its multi-channel booking engine enabling AA's NDC content to access a broad customer base, including retailers, corporate clients, universities, and wholesalers.

"Our commitment to reshaping airline distribution and revolutionising air travel experiences for our customers remains steadfast," Aeronology CEO, Russell Carstensen, said.

"Introducing American Airlines'



NDC offers to travel businesses is a key milestone for Aeronology, and our association with this renowned airline group is a matter of great pride," he added.

NDC offers from American Airlines include its American Eagle regional partners, as well as its bundled fare options, Main Plus and Main Select.

**MEANWHILE**, AA has informed *Travel Daily* that it will be releasing the list of eligible global agencies able to book the full benefits of its AAdvantage loyalty program "in the coming weeks".

The World Travel Agents Associations Alliance called on AA to reverse a decision to only allow select agency clients to qualify for miles accrual (*TD* 11 Apr). **AB**

Travel Daily  
ON LOCATION



ROME

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you en route to Rome where we will board Princess Cruises' next-generation LNG-powered ship, *Sun Princess*.

**AS EXCITING** as it is to try out a new cruise ship, there's a different sense of excitement when it's the first of a new line of ship from one of the World's Leading Cruise Lines.

It may be the third vessel to carry the name *Sun Princess*, but the new Sphere class vessel from Princess Cruises is the epitome of the next-generation for the Carnival Corp brand.

In the coming days *Travel Daily* has a packed program of behind-the-scenes tours and interviews, with all the juicy stories set to follow.

# BE IN TO WIN



**NEW SKI-LAND**  
NOW OPEN

Be in to win the ultimate winter experience in New Ski-Land for you and a friend, including flights, activities, and ski gear - valued over \$10,000.

AIR NEW ZEALAND

APPLY NOW

100% PURE  
NEW ZEALAND  
traveltrade.newzealand.com



**More  
Inventory  
Easy  
Filters  
on  
TAAP**

**ENJOY TODAY**

[www.expeditaap.com.au](http://www.expeditaap.com.au)

telephone  
1800 726 618

email  
[expedia-au@  
discovertheworld.com](mailto:expedia-au@discovertheworld.com)

## Aussies jump aboard regional cruises

**AUSTRALIANS** showed a preference for close-to-home cruise itineraries last year, with roughly 85% opting for bookings within the waters of Australia, New Zealand & the South Pacific.

New data released today by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) found the increase in regional sailings in 2023 was up from the 72.5% of passengers embarking on regional voyages in 2019.

The report also showed taking a cruise continues to resonate more with younger Australians, bucking historical trends.

Almost one-third of cruisers last year were aged under 40, while the average age of a cruise passenger in 2023 dropped from 50.4 in 2019 to 48.4 in 2023.

The finding aligned with a recent Tourism Transport Forum study released in Jan (**TD** 15 Jan), which indicated a third of Aussies under the age of 35 are planning to cruise this year.

NSW remains the biggest source of cruise passengers with 57.7% of the market, followed by Qld (23%) Victoria (10.9%), WA (3.8%), and SA (3.8%).

Wendy Wu Tours  
**CHINA FLY FREE FRENZY**  
ONLY \$99 PP DEPOSIT!  
CHOOSE FROM  
1 FLY FREE - selected tours  
2 PARTNER FLY FREE - most tours  
3 SOLOS SAVE 50% on airfares - most tours  
Explore Now →



Unsurprisingly, the average duration of an ocean cruise was down slightly from nine days to 8.21 days in line with a growing preference for local sailings.

For cruises taken outside of our region, most Aussies elected for a Mediterranean voyage (5.3%).

This was followed by Asia (2.5%), Alaska (1.9%), northern Europe (1%), the Caribbean (1%) and Trans-Atlantic cruises (0.8%).

CLIA's report also reiterated Australia's position as one of the best markets in the world for

cruise penetration, with almost one in every 20 Australians having taken an ocean cruise.

Overall, 1.25 million Australians took an ocean cruise during 2023, up from 1.24 million in 2019 and close to the all-time high of 1.35 million achieved in 2018.

The result entrenches Australia as the world's fourth largest cruise market, behind only the United States (16.9 million), Germany (2.5 million) and the United Kingdom (2.2 million). **AB**

### The best Eva holiday

**TAIWAN** is riding a wave as one of Asia's trendiest destinations, with agents able to engage with some of the country's best dining options & festivals - see how Eva Air can get you there on **p7**.

**TROPICAL PARADISE  
SEEKS MARKETING  
GENIUS**

If you have 5+ years experience in tourism marketing, help us make the world fall in love with Samoa as a Technical Advisor - Marketing Specialist.

Beautiful SAMOA

**NEW CALEDONIA  
ON SALE**

**FLY DIRECT WITH AIRCALIN**  
SYDNEY > NOUMEA FROM \$529 RETURN\*  
BRISBANE > NOUMEA FROM \$589 RETURN\*  
MELBOURNE > NOUMEA FROM \$579 RETURN\*

new caledonia  
GET CLOSER TO LOVE  
WHAT YOU LOVE  
Aircalin  
SALE ENDS 25 APRIL - TRAVEL PERIOD 01 JUNE - 31 DECEMBER\*  
\*blackout dates and Seasonal surcharges apply.

**THE PLACE  
TO BE  
IN THE MALDIVES**

**CENTARA  
HOTELS & RESORTS**  
Centara Grand Island Resort & Spa Maldives

## Bunard takes on brand role



**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group's (FCTG) independent Envoyage brand has appointed Jodie Bunard as its Global Product Lead, bringing 25 years of travel industry experience to the role.

Bunard's (pictured) arrival on 01 May will see her charged with driving a product strategy that is aligned with Envoyage's vision to be "the home and heart of the travel industry for the independent world".

FCTG Managing Director of Luxury and Independent, Danielle Galloway, said Bunard will play a "significant role" in making Envoyage's stated vision a reality.

"We are excited to embark on this journey with Jodie and look forward to leveraging her extensive expertise to drive growth, innovation, and excellence across our global

product portfolio," she said.

Bunard's professional expertise has been predominately in the marketing and communications space, as well as having strategic leadership abilities.

Prior to joining FCTG 16 years ago, Bunard held positions at The Travel Corporation, Kumuka Worldwide, and Stella Travel Services in New Zealand.

She will continue to be based in New Zealand from 01 May. *AB*

## Traveltek integrates

**TRAVELTEK** has upgraded its iSell platform with the integration of API technology from Duffel, with new modifications allowing users to access hundreds of airlines through a single API.

Powered by Duffel's Flights API product, Traveltek customers can benefit from easier access to NDC, GDS and direct low-cost carrier offerings.

Traveltek said Duffel's integration with iSell marks a "significant milestone" in streamlining the process for agents to offer a range of flights and services on its platform.

"Duffel's disruptive approach to air distribution aligns seamlessly with our commitment to excellence and we are excited to deepen our partnership and continue delivering exceptional product capabilities to our customers," Traveltek CEO, Mal Barrit, said.

## G'day appointments

**CHARTERED** Accountant Adrian Whiting has come on board at G'Day Group as a Non-Executive Director to help the company boost its strategic leadership and development capabilities.

The company has also bolstered its C-Suite ranks, welcoming John Domino as its new Chief Development Officer.

Domino joins the organisation from his most recent role as COO with Peregrine Corporation, where he specialised in retail and commercial developments.

Around Formosa  
*Taiwan*  
FROM ONLY  
**\$2,699**  
PER PERSON TWIN SHARE  
LAND ONLY  
\*Surcharges may apply  
DURATION: 10 DAYS  
VIEW DEAL

## ATIA UPDATE

from Ingrid Fraser, Director of Public Policy & Advocacy



**IT'S** just four weeks until we find out where the Federal Government intends to focus its funds for 2024-25, and ATIA will be watching closely for measures showing government's support for the travel industry.

Decisions on how the money is allocated generally take place months before the Federal Budget is officially handed down in May, and this is why ATIA put forward our asks on behalf of members in Jan, following up with meetings in Canberra.

With one cybercrime being reported every six minutes, we have asked for further investment in cybersecurity training and support for small businesses, alongside measures to help businesses and their staff improve their digital capability.

We also supported the continuation of the important Reviving International Tourism Grant Program.

With another 15% hike in passport fees set to take place

in Jul and countless Australians who are still yet to renew their passport, we made the case that the Passport Office must be funded to further enhance the digital passport application and renewal process to make it easier for Australians to be travel-ready and book that next trip.

Traineeship wage subsidies and financial incentives for businesses and trainees are set to be significantly reduced or removed entirely in Jul, pending the outcome of an independent review that is taking place.

ATIA is representing members in the consultations to make the case that support must be maintained or strengthened to ensure an adequate pipeline of skilled workers.

We would love to hear from any member who has a positive story to tell about how the government funding helped them take on a trainee - these types of stories make the best impact!

Dean Long and I will be in Canberra at Budget time to hear directly from the relevant ministers as to what the announcements mean for travel businesses and we will of course spread the word to our members.

## Italy's biggest year ever

**THE** number of Australians visiting Italy last year increased by 19% compared to 2019 - marking a record number to visit the country in a single year.

In 2023, 311,760 Aussies made their way to the European destination, with the numbers swelling to unprecedented levels from Jul onwards, fuelled by travellers seeking end-of-summer and shoulder season trips.

Sep 2023 was 18% higher than Sep 2019, with the upward trend continuing through Oct and Nov, faring better than 2019 by 21%

and 22% respectively.

"We know Australians have a strong connection with Italy which has only blossomed since travel patterns have normalised," Italian National Tourist Board Australia & NZ Country Manager, Emanuele Attanasio, said.

"Australians are more open to travelling to Italy outside the key summer months, they know the weather is milder, but not at the cost of sunshine and exciting seasonal events," he added.

Coastal resorts and wine regions are among the popular draws. *AB*



### BWH sustainability

**BWH** Hotels is continuing to prioritise sustainable travel across its global portfolio, with two new eco-conscious brand partnerships.

The company is working with Tesla to install electric vehicle charging stations at properties throughout the United States and Canada.

Installation will begin this year, and is planned to expand internationally.

BWH is also partnering with Green Key Global, the leading sustainability certification organisation for the hotel and lodging industry in North America, to implement a standardised sustainability program across the United States and Canada.

BWH is also encouraging individual properties to prioritise localised sustainability efforts in their respective markets.

The company is highlighting its properties, which are going the extra mile to give back to local environments and communities, including Best Western Premier The Lodge On Lake Detroit, which has played a crucial role in restoring and preserving the local shoreline.

BWH is also recognising Nordic Hotel Forum in Tallinn, which is the first property in the city to have its own beehives.

## AIR NZ INKS BIGGEST SAF DEAL TO DATE

**AIR** New Zealand and Neste have signed an agreement for nine million litres of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) - representing the largest purchase from Neste by any airline outside North America and Europe.

The Kiwi carrier's Chair, Therese Walsh, made the announcement in Singapore this week, stating that SAF is the biggest weapon the airline has in the fight to lower emissions quickly.

"Decarbonising Air New Zealand's operations is essential for the airline's long-term ability to connect New Zealanders to the world, as well as support the country's trade and tourism sectors, and SAF is a key enabler of this," Walsh said.

"SAF is currently the only solution to significantly reduce emissions from long-haul flight, but it currently makes up less than 1% of the global fuel supply.

"For aviation to reach its net zero carbon emissions goals by 2050, the SAF industry will need



to scale significantly," she added.

Produced at Neste's Singapore refinery, which only expanded its production capability last year, the SAF will be blended with conventional jet fuel to meet the required specifications before being delivered to Air NZ before the end of this year

Such is the extent of the deal, NZ PM (and former Air NZ CEO), Christopher Luxon, weighed in on the scale of the order.

"This collaboration is world-leading and I congratulate Dame Therese and Air New Zealand for

their commitment to sustainable aviation," Luxon said.

The SAF is expected to deliver a reduction of carbon emissions by up to 80% over the life cycle of the fuel compared to using traditional fossil jet fuel, which includes its production as well as transport emissions.

After inking the SAF agreement, Neste said it is proud to support Air New Zealand's decarbonisation focus and it is now looking forward to continuing working together to reach key climate goals. *AB*

### Fairmont Mount Kenya launches new eco tours to support local communities

**THE** Fairmont Mount Kenya Safari Club has introduced new off-the-beaten-track eco safaris in Laikipia.

Running all year-round, the resort's nature tours focus on sustainability and conservation, with part of the ambition to support the circular economy of the Kenyan ecosystem.

Guests can take part in activities such as tree planting, attend an animal orphanage to learn about wildlife protection, and meet with the local community to discuss conservation projects and local artistic pursuits.

The safaris also include guided cycling tours of the wilderness



to observe zebras, gazelles, buffalo, impalas, baboons and mountain bongo. *AB*

# THE KIMBERLEY THE PONANT WAY

LAST CABINS FOR 2024!  
FLIGHTS & TRANSFERS INCLUDED\*

DISCOVER

 **PONANT**



## MONEY

**WELCOME** to Money, *TD's* Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

**AU\$1 = US\$0.644**

**THE** Aussie has had a bumpy start to the week, dipping slightly against all major currencies, including almost two cents against the US.

Our dollar also lost ground on the Chinese yuan, down three cents compared to last week.

Meanwhile, tensions in the Middle East has not done too much damage to the foreign exchange market, with analysts suggesting only moderate risk.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.644
UK	£0.518
NZ	\$1.091
Euro	€0.606
Japan	¥99.37
Thailand	฿23.68
China	¥4.664
South Africa	12.24
Canada	\$0.888
Crude oil	US\$90.45

## Sabre appoints

**SABRE** has strengthened its APAC team with the appointment of seasoned industry leader Rajiv Bhatia, who has joined the team as Executive Director APAC Market Expansion.

Rajiv, formerly of Bird Group, will be instrumental in further expanding Sabre's footprint in key growth markets, including India, one of the world's fastest growing travel marketplaces.

He possesses extensive experience in the travel industry.

## Sonia Jones scoops small biz



**SONIA** Jones Travel (SJT) in Brisbane has taken out top honours at the 2024 Australian Small Business Champion Awards.

The Queensland agency was announced as the winner in the travel agency category at the Awards' National Presentation Evening Gala Event at The Star, Sydney on the weekend.

SJT beat out 13 finalists, including Armani Travel (NSW), Cherrybrook Travel (NSW), Global Travel Group (NSW), I Love Cruising with Kelly (NSW), itravel with sekha (NSW), Riverland Travel (NSW), Sydney Harbour Days (NSW), Legacy Journeys (Queensland), Maestro Global Travel MyHoliday2 (Queensland), Travel Moore (Victoria), and Travel Project (Victoria).

The business extended its gratitude to its clients, partners, and supporters for their continued trust and collaboration, stating it remains committed to delivering unparalleled

experiences and shaping the future of bespoke travel.

The travel agency also received a customised statuette trophy and certificate upon its win.

"Operating a small business today requires steadfast commitment, leadership, savviness, creativity, people skills, vision, social consciousness, and a spirited drive - all elements of success that our independent judging panel pinpointed as among the key reasons for their selection of Sonia Jones Travel as 2024 sole Champion of the Travel Agency category," said Steve Loe, Awards Founder and MD of Precedent Productions, which coordinates the Awards.

"We've been running the Champion Awards program since 1999 and I must say, this year's submissions were particularly inspiring and spoke volumes of the resilience of small business operators during tough times," he added. *MS*



## Window Seat

**MARRIED** At *First Sights's* (MAFS) self-described love expert John Aiken has revealed his favourite hotspots in Australia and New Zealand.

As a former cricketer of New Zealand and the husband of a Kiwi news presenter, Aiken said he is well-placed to share his much-loved destinations on the beautiful Land of the Long White Cloud.

First cab off the rank is Queenstown, where he is keen to relax, now that season 11 of *MAFS* is done and dusted.

"I love [Queenstown] as a destination," Aiken revealed to *9Honey*, adding "there are lots of extreme activities for kids, a lot of quality food and wine for me and my wife and just beautiful scenery".

However, Aiken's favourite spot in New Zealand is the famous Mount Maunganui.

"My wife and kids climbed the mountain, I just sort of went around it," he admitted.

"It's about two hours from Auckland on the east coast.

"It is very much like Noosa, it has a beautiful white main beach, it's got loads of beautiful restaurants and shopping is great and the weather's fantastic - so you get everything there."

Aiken enjoys spending time with the family in Noosa too.

"It's a great place to go where you kind of get everything at your fingertips and the weather is fantastic," he revealed.



**WILD** *Awaits*  
AATKings

**SAVE** *up to* **15%**  
on selected Guided Holidays\*

Discover more

1. **Field of Light at Sunrise**

Under the cover of darkness, wander through 50,000 magical hand-crafted frosted glass spheres of light. Make your way to the dune top and watch in awe as the sun appears in the distance behind Uluru, flooding the landscape, including Kata Tjuta behind you with light. Experience this optional tour on the 15-day **Outback Adventure**.

\*T&C's apply

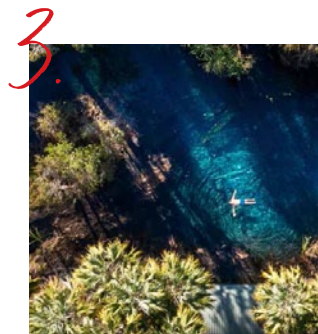
Image Credits: Tourism Australia, Tourism NT, Evelien Langeveld, Sean Scott and Shaana McNaught.

## TOP 5 OF OUR UNIQUE NORTHERN TERRITORY EXPERIENCES



### Kakadu National Park

Only four sites in Australia appear on the World Heritage List for both their natural and cultural significance and Kakadu is one of them. On the **Top End Highlights** 6-day tour, you'll cruise Kakadu's Yellow Water Billabong spotting an endless array of wildlife.



### Mataranka Thermal Pools

You'll never, never find a place as beautiful as Mataranka. Explore, or soak in the palm-fringed thermal springs before heading up to Katherine on the 11-day **Outback Safari** tour.



### Tiwi Islands

The Wurrumiyanga Aboriginal community will take you on an unforgettable journey through a rich history and culture. Discover bush tucker, world-class art and their love for footy, on the **Kakadu, Nitmiluk (Katherine) Gorge & Tiwi Islands Explorer** 4-day tour.



### Earth Sanctuary

Become a guest of an astronomer's family on the **Outback Adventure** 15-day tour. The Alice Springs night sky will not disappoint, as the Falzon brothers entertain you with an outback barbecue and campfire sing-along while the Milky Way slowly appears.

# Discover the Beauty of Taiwan

Taiwan is a favourite new destination for all travellers.

Festivals, events, eats, adventures, new experiences and more.

For all kinds of travellers, there's one place to go - Taiwan, the Heart of Asia.

Let EVA AIR take you there!

Learn interesting facts about Taiwan and know more about EVA AIR by visiting EVA Taiwan Travel Academy.

[REGISTER NOW](#)



**Taiwan**  
THE HEART OF ASIA

