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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of the latest travel industry news, including our **Luxury** page, a cover wrap from **Tourism New Zealand**, a colourful photo page from **Collette** and a product page from **Sportsnet**, plus a full page from **Infinity Holidays**.

Discounts with TNZ

AGENTS can gain access to more than 250 discounts across airfares, accommodation, and experiences when they sign up to the Explore New Zealand Discount Programme.

See the **cover page** for details.

Win a Thai holiday

INFINITY Holidays is highlighting three new Thailand packages, with agents who sell the products during Aug in the running to win their own Thai getaway - more info on **page 8**.

WHM change costly: report

A **NEW** report has given the Federal Government a timely reminder about the full value the Working Holiday Maker (WHM) visa program offers the regional tourism sector.

The government is in the process of finalising its Regional Migration Review, which is currently mulling the idea of scrapping the need for WHM visitors to complete 88 days of work in the regions if they want to extend for a second year.

A new study jointly commissioned by the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC), the National Farmers' Federation, and the Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel, has estimated such a move would cost the Australian economy around \$200 million a year, as well as more than 1,000 jobs.

ATEC MD, Peter Shelley, stressed the WHM visa has been successful in delivering a great

work and holiday experience for the past 50 years.

"As we head into the next 50 years, we want to ensure the WHM program delivers great outcomes for our working holiday makers, [and] our employers across our industry," Shelley said.

The report coincides with new data from Tourism Research Australia, which shows regional tourism is enjoying a solid rebound from the pandemic.

TRA figures show the economic value of tourism grew by 97% in the country's regions in 2022-23, with half of all regional communities also up by 50% on the previous year. **AB**

Earn with Sportsnet

START earning commissions today on Sportsnet Holidays' travel packages, designed to appeal to sports fans and travel enthusiasts - see the **back page**.

Travel Daily
ON LOCATION



RANDWICK

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of by **BtTB**, which is hosting a conference in Randwick today.

WE'RE knee-deep in corporate travel for the first day of the BtTB Business Travel Conference at Randwick Racecourse in Sydney.

The program is jam-packed with presentations and panel discussions covering topics like unlocking business class travel, creating environmentally-friendly travel policies and outlooks into the future of aviation, supply chain, TMCs and accommodation.

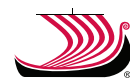
Tomorrow, the Travel Manager of the Year Award will also be announced at the event.



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Balance before Bali

AN INDONESIAN tourism academic has proposed travellers to Bali should disclose their bank balance before travelling to Australia's most popular overseas holiday destination.

Ida Bagus Raka Suardana, a professor at the National Education University in Denpasar, has suggested Bali only accept visitors who have a significant amount of cash savings to spend while on holiday on the island.

"There's no point in tourists coming here to Bali, just eating rice and staying in cheap places," Suardana told *The Bali Sun*.

While the average Aussie spends around \$2,300 per person, tourists from Europe have a higher average spend, with Austrians for example forking out around A\$6,565 per trip.

UK warnings amid unrest

THE Federal Government has warned Australian travellers to the UK to avoid areas of rioting taking place across several cities, as tensions escalate following a fatal stabbing attack at a Southport dance class last week.

In an update to its advisory for one of Australia's largest outbound markets, Smarttraveller urged travellers not to go to areas where protests are occurring due to the potential for disruption and violence, suggesting those already in the country to monitor the media for updates.

Violence perpetrated by various far-right groups has been rising over the last week in the wake of a spike in online misinformation, with many messages falsely claiming the suspect in the stabbing was an illegal immigrant.

Among the cities travellers currently need to exercise heightened caution in include London, Manchester, Southport,



Aldershot, Liverpool, Sunderland, and Hartlepool, with the unrest likely to spread even farther over coming days.

Despite the update from DFAT, the overall travel advisory for the UK has not been lifted.

In the town of Rotherham in South Yorkshire, rioters this week turned their attention to several hotels, such as the Holiday Inn Express, which saw projectiles thrown at the property because it has been housing asylum seekers.

Protests have also broken out in Northern Ireland's capital, Belfast.

Newly installed Prime Minister Keir Starmer said his government has organised a "standing army" of riot police to deal with any further escalation. *AB*

Rex wants to delay

THE administrators for Rex Airlines is seeking a court order to delay a potential board coup (*TD* 12 Jul) by 28 business days, claiming any meeting would be costly and not in the interest of customers or creditors.

Appearing in the Federal Court yesterday to outline next steps of its voluntary administration process, EY argued former CEO Lim Kim Hai's bid to remove several directors would be effectively pointless while the directors have no power.

Counsel for EY, Daniel Krochmalik, added the priority for Rex should be financial viability and exiting administration.

"Creditors are the ones that determine the future of the company and the creditors' interests are paramount," he said.



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Rail Europe

Rail Journey Inspiration by Rita Malik, Tailormade Travelling

Rita's dream journey is all about food, experiencing local specialties in gourmet restaurants, little 'hole in the wall' eateries and farmers' markets, while travelling through sensational scenery on superfast, regional, scenic, cogwheel and historic steam trains.

Kicking off in Paris, she'd make her way to Reims and Strasbourg before heading to Switzerland to enjoy some scenic trains and views afforded by Mt Pilatus and St Moritz. From there she'll explore Italy's Turin, Cinque Terre, Tuscany, Bologna and Reggio Emilia before finishing in Austria's Innsbruck and Salzburg.

Read Rita's full creative entry on [Rail Europe's FB page](#).

The most convenient and flexible way to explore this journey or across Europe is with a [Eurail Global Mobile Pass](#).

Offering unlimited rail travel across 33 countries, pick from 'Continuous' or 'Flexi' travel options. Note discounts apply for families (free travel for children under 11yo), youth travellers (under 27yo) and seniors (60+).

Advisors are reminded that seat reservations are required on most high-speed and international services. Most of these bookings can be booked via the agent portal. [See here for instructions](#).

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Click [HERE](#) for more inspiring 4, 7 and 15-day themed itineraries around Europe.

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Goodwin's new gig

ACCOMMODATION Australia (AA) has moved swiftly to replace its experienced chief Michael Johnson (**TD 27** May), appointing former Australian Airports Association CEO James Goodwin, to lead the peak body from Sep.

Goodwin will become only the second leader of AA, was which formed in Jul 2023 after a merger of Tourism Accommodation Australia and the Australian Accommodation Association.

"In Goodwin we have the perfect person to head the association in the challenging period in the lead-up to the federal election and beyond, as we deliver on our purpose to be an influential advocate for a better future," AA Chair, David Mansfield, said.

"Given his background, he is obviously no stranger to member associations and has a proven track record of putting his members first - something which is our top priority," he added.



Aussies seek Alice truth

ALICE Springs has reason to be excited for the future, but the past has been taxing, Aboriginal Tourism Committee Chair Paul Ah Chee Ngala conceded to media in Alice Springs this week.

Ngala spoke to journalists on The Ghan this week as it stopped in the Red Centre to celebrate its 95th birthday (**TD 05** Aug).

He suggested that recent significant investment from industry would help drive tourism and increase the quality of facilities in Alice Springs, and that tourists, particularly Australians, were "looking for what they believe might be the truth".

"What we believe now is that there's a generation that's coming through that are a lot more willing to reconcile within themselves and are then finding it easier to reconcile with somebody else - and they don't fear it," Ngala said.

"They don't fear Aboriginal people, they don't fear that we're going to come in and take their land and take their house, all that sort of stuff.

"As Australians, we're all here for the long journey, we've got a beautiful country, we love our country, no matter where we come from, and we want to share our stories and we want to show the spirit of the land within our country so people can go away feeling like this is home."

Referring to the recent curfew placed on the town and the

fact that it arguably lives in the shadow of Uluru, he insisted that Alice Springs was heading in the right direction.

"If anybody's going to come and visit internationally and even nationally, they're going to go and see Uluru," he said.

"Uluru is the spiritual part of Australia and not everybody can go out to view different parts of Australia, so you have got to get to Uluru.

"[But] it's about sharing the spirit, it's about coming and looking at the wonderful attractions we have."

Ngala pointed to the success of Beanie Festival, Red CentreNats, Desert Mob and the Henley on Todd Regatta as some of the reasons why tourists should spend more time in and around Alice Springs. **DF**

Scoot adds two more

SCOOT will receive two more Embraer E190-E2 aircraft in Sep and Oct, with the Singapore Airlines subsidiary confirming plans to use the planes to add new Asian destinations.

The carrier will introduce twice-weekly flights from Singapore to Kertajati in Indonesia from 28 Sep, as well as five-times weekly services to Malacca in Malaysia from 23 Oct.

Scoot's network will grow to 72 destinations, which already includes PER, SYD and MEL.

Ama pays new deal

AMAWATERWAYS is now offering Australian and New Zealand travel advisors payments through TravelPay B2B.

The payment solution, in partnership with CATO, enables advisors to make secure bank account payments to suppliers.

"As a new entrant into this market, two of our key goals are to build trusted relationships and to be easy to do business with, and so we're proud to be partnering with TravelPay B2B to allow our customers to process efficient payments with AmaWaterways," the line's MD ANZ, Steve Richards, said.

Nadi does Dallas

FIJI Airways will operate its first-ever non-stop flights between Nadi and Dallas from Dec.

The carrier said the upcoming 13-hour service will operate three times a week using its modern A350-900 XWB aircraft.

The inaugural flight will take off on 10 Dec in time for the busy holiday season, and follows a move announced in Jun by the carrier to attract more American tourists to the country through a loyalty tie-up with American Airlines (**TD 28** Jun).

To celebrate the announcement, Fiji Airways has launched special return airfares between Fiji and Dallas from Australia, with prices starting from \$1,599 return from Australia, available to buy on the Fiji Airways website **HERE**.



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Hotel learning tool

INTEGRATED hotel technology and services company Cendyn has introduced a new learning centre designed to advance hotels' knowledge of its solutions.

The new centre provides hotel managers with educational resources and training programs via Cendyn's 'Knowledge Cloud', which hosts a range of courses to promote enhanced performance.

"Hotel professionals will gain confidence with all Cendyn solutions to facilitate commercial goals for the hotel, and in simple practical steps, hoteliers can develop a digital guest journey to find guests, drive bookings and grow revenue," Cendyn said.

Each user is also able to personalise training by selecting topics of interest - details **HERE**.

Connections locks in success



MELBOURNE'S historic Pentridge Prison recently played host to Connections Travel Group, which gathered its national team last weekend for the group's first conference in five years.

Themed as 'Ubuntu Thrive 2024', the conference focused on empowering attendees to not only push to overcome challenges both personally and professionally, but also to be proud and celebrate the sense of achievement that comes with it.

The conference was hosted by mentalist and behaviour expert, Anthony Laye, who facilitated

panel discussions themed on personal growth, and a keynote from ATIA chief, Dean Long.

A second keynote from Simon Kuestenmacher helped the group reflect on the theme of thriving and professional growth.

A central trope to the event was the presence of a triangle, a symbolic motif chosen to represent the underlying spirit of strength and resilience.

The group walked away with a powerful reminder of the strength and resilience of the human spirit that lives within the Connections agent community.

Adina Pentridge sits alongside Melbourne's fabled former prison, & along with the hotel, is home to The Interlude, a wellness retreat where you can even sleep inside one of the prison's former cells, albeit in beds far exceeding what prisoners enjoyed. **ML**

The Connections Travel Group network is **pictured** above.

Nauru visitor spike

TOURISM in the small Pacific island nation of Nauru has this year already reached 94% of 2023 volumes, new data has shown.

"We are seeing the biggest increases in adventurous Baby Boomers and bucket-listers, with most visitors coming from Europe, North America and Australia, however we expect to also see younger Gen X and Millennial visitors over time - especially as adventure travellers learn about our country," Nauru Tourism Office representative, Cramer Cain, said.

Major tourism attractions in Nauru include the beaches of Anibare Bay, guided hiking, war history, cultural experiences, fishing, and museums.

Nauru is also looking to expand its car and bike hire services.

Window Seat

PACKAGE holiday company Thomas Cook has teamed up with the Marine Conservation Society to raise awareness about travellers discarding holiday items on beaches.

The striking campaign created by McCann Birmingham is running on airport billboards around the UK, and depicts marine life such as turtles and dolphins as half-deflated inflatables.

Thomas Cook launched the marketing push following on from a startling survey commissioned by YourSayPays, which revealed 37% of holidaymakers buy inflatables for their trips in the UK and abroad, but just half of those said they reuse or recycle the inflatable after the trip.

A third also suggested they would be more likely to recycle inflatables if hotels had the appropriate facilities.



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Collette gallops into 2025

IN PREPARATION for the launch of the 2025 season (Collette's 107th year) and release of their new 2025-26 Worldwide brochure, the Collette team used Equine Assisted Learning to align their focus.

Leading Edge Professional Development led the conference, with their Equine Assisted Learning workshops giving participants the opportunity to experience the 'herd' environment and deepen their awareness of themselves and their colleagues. It is modelled on how horses lead in their natural environment.

Karen Deveson, MD for Collette Australia, said "Collette is a trailblazer brand in Australia. What better way to bring together the team to focus on the year ahead!"

"Working with horses helped us work on our communications skills and teamwork. We have a great team and this weekend gave us the chance to be vulnerable together...this is one of the best conferences I have been part of."

Collette's showcases start 15 Aug around Australia. Join Collette at an event **HERE**.



THE Collette team with their horse at the conference.

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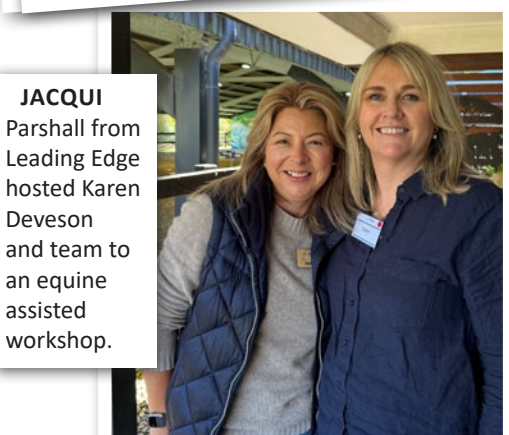
ALL teams combined to Blaze some Trails at Collette!



KAREN Deveson & David Farrar leading the horse pack.



AMANDA McCann Wilson and Karen Deveson are all smiles for their team mates.



JACQUI Parshall from Leading Edge hosted Karen Deveson and team to an equine assisted workshop.



DAVID Farrar with some of the Australian Sales Team with their international thinking caps on.



MARIANNE Santos & Narelle Riley, untangling any problems along the way!

QT signature dining

A **BUZZING** Manhattan-style steakhouse will headline the dining focus for QT Singapore upon the hotel opening its doors to guests next month, the hotel has revealed.

The new Cygnet Bar and Grill will be themed around presenting top-quality produce bursting with flavour and backed by an extensive wine list with over 30 labels from international growers.

At the helm of Cygnet is award-winning Chef Sean Connolly, who has overseen a menu boasting items such as a 'steak library', including Japanese sirloin cut by the 1/2-inch and cooked over the coals at tableside.

The hotel will also feature Rooftop by QT, a transitional relaxation and party hotspot for guests.

VIRTUOSO'S FOCUS ON TOMORROW

BUSINESS development and leadership influencer Simon Sinek will make his fourth appearance at Virtuoso Travel Week as the luxury agent group prepares for its annual takeover of Las Vegas.

The event, taking place from 10-16 Aug, will see thousands of luxury specialist travel advisors from 90 countries descend on 'Sin City' for the week of networking, seminars, appointments and professional development.

To open proceedings, Sinek will take part in a powerful exchange of ideas and leadership advice with Virtuoso Chairman and CEO, Matthew Upchurch.

Changes to the line-up for 2024 will see enhanced personalisation added to the one-on-one appointment format, with meetings now self-selected and matched instead of appointed,



to give delegates more control of who they would like to meet.

The new system has allowed 95% of delegates to successfully receive appointments with their preferred exhibitors and partners.

Another new feature for 2024 is 'Braindate', a networking game which facilitates conversations between delegates based on topics advised prior to the event

to stimulate problem solving and knowledge sharing.

The week will also feature the third-annual Virtuoso Travel Tech Summit, a think tank designed to encourage agents to embrace smart technology such as AI to improve human connections, rather than replace them.

Virtuoso has also expanded its popular Community Globetrotting event to two days due to its high success in driving sales.

The event aims to spotlight Virtuoso suppliers across a variety of product and travel styles, and will this year introduce a new sustainability pavilion.

MEANWHILE, Virtuoso has promoted Paul Kearney as the newest member of its Senior Leadership Team, in the role of Senior Vice President, Technology.

Kearney brings more than 30 years in technological innovation and since joining the network in 2019, has helped the organisation shift to a cloud-centric operation and re-engineered its data analytics capabilities. *ML*

Raes set to expand

BOUTIQUE Byron Bay retreat Raes on Wategos will open 10 new suites in a luxury Mediterranean style later this year on a second site nearby.

Located 100 metres from the existing site, the new suites will be supported by several indoor common areas with open-log fireplaces set around tropical landscaped gardens.

Guests will also be able to enjoy two lap pools, one with a waterfall and a solar-heated option with cabanas and lounges.

Luxperience 2024 gearing up to be best ever

THERE'S just four weeks to go before registrations close for luxury travel trade showcase, Luxperience 2024, which is shaping up to be a record-breaking event.

Taking place at the ICC Sydney from 19-22 Nov, the event will showcase local and global luxury travel partners, and presents a great opportunity for anyone wanting to enhance their luxury product knowledge.

The remaining one, two and three-day Luxperience passes

are filling fast, with event organisers saying they have been overwhelmed with the quality of both advisors and partners for this year's event.

Luxury travel advisors and agencies are urged to register as quickly as possible, with Luxperience holding places for national travel professionals, particularly those living in NSW.

Stay tuned, as the event still has several exciting announcements to be made over the next few weeks.



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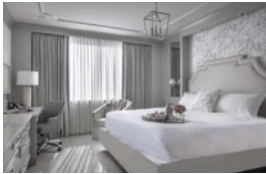
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ACCOMMODATION

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Hotel Monteleone, the oldest hotel in the New Orleans' French Quarter, has undergone a luxurious makeover. The historic property now boasts a restored Iberville Tower, upgraded guest rooms, and enhanced suites adorned with intricate millwork, serene artwork, and lavish marble bathrooms featuring rain showerheads and opulent vanities. The hotel is also home to the Carousel Bar, which blends old-world charm with modern glamour.



Guests staying at **InterContinental Auckland** now have a private luxury haven where they can work or relax, with Club InterContinental now open. The new space, which offers views of Waitemata Harbour, is accessible seven days a week exclusively to guests staying in dedicated Club rooms and suites. Adorned with local artworks and photography, Club InterContinental will serve breakfast, afternoon tea, and twilight canapes and beverages.



Anurak Community Lodge, a 19-key ec lodge in southern Thailand next to the Khao Sok National Park, has refreshed its guest rooms, the main restaurant, public areas, and water supply. New air-conditioning units and bathrooms have been added to five guestrooms, while new mosquito nets and bigger high-quality towels are now in all rooms. Additionally, the lodge's six hectares of wildflower gardens have been enhanced by a local gardener.



Bringing back the nostalgia of old-school beachfront motels, **Surfside 22** has opened in Wollongong on the south coast of NSW. Originally established in 1963, the new owners have lovingly restored the building to ensure it retains its original charm. The motel features 16 elegant rooms equipped with kitchens and bathrooms; there's also a sauna and plunge pool.



Travellers seeking an off-grid, digital detox can now stay at **CABN Hahndorf**, nestled within the heart of Adelaide Hills and just a half-hour drive from Adelaide CBD. Hidden among a natural amphitheatre of trees, the eco-friendly cabin sleeps up to four people and offers a kitchenette, bathroom with a shower and flushing toilet, solar reverse-cycle heating/cooling, indoor wood fireplace, and more.

Feel free in Southeast Qld



SOMERSET and Lockyer Valley in Southeast Queensland have teamed up to launch a new tourism campaign targeting the domestic self-drive and caravanning market.

The 'Feel the Freedom' campaign highlights a five-day self-drive itinerary through the Somerset and Lockyer Valley regions, and features accommodation, caravan parks, overnight rest areas, and several unique visitor experiences.

A social media campaign featuring Drive Queensland has attracted positive feedback after rolling out in May, and was promoted at Caravanning Queensland's Let's Go Caravan and Camping Super Show in Brisbane in Jun.

"The Somerset and Lockyer Valley regions have some of the most stunning camping and caravanning locations in Queensland, and we are thrilled to support them in their collaboration," said Queensland Country Tourism Chief Executive

Officer, Peter Homan.

"If you're looking for the ultimate multi-day caravanning holiday, look no further because this one ticks all the boxes."

Lockyer Valley Regional Council Mayor Tanya Milligan added, "'Feel the Freedom' is not just a tagline; it's an open invitation for travellers to make lifelong memories while exploring Queensland Country's caravanning cornerstone".

"We know that travellers do not recognise council borders, so offering this joint driving itinerary is a win for visitors.

"We're excited to be part of this journey and can't wait for more people to come and see what makes both our regions so special," Milligan enthused.

Travellers and agents can download a free copy of the 'Feel the Freedom' itinerary **HERE**. *JM*

Pictured: A tourism boost to Somerset and Lockyer is on the cards: Karina Griffiths, Nedizha and Raquaya Thierry enjoy glamping at the Esk Caravan Park.



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Bangkok Street Eats by tuk tuk tour

One Way Flight Bangkok to Chiang Mai

5 nights in Chiang Mai at Cross Chiang Mai Riverside with Breakfast in a Standard Suite with Garden View

Chiang Mai City Rickshaw half day private tour

Bike Historic: Old City Chiang Mai Shared Tour

Return airport transfers (Chiang Mai)

HELIO CODE: AU47186

FROM

\$1,499 pp twin share*

[Book now](#)



Earn commissions on travel packages with Sportsnet Holidays

It's no secret that Australians love sport and travel, so combining the two for a "sportscurstion" makes a lot of sense; appealing to both sports fans and travel enthusiasts. And that is precisely what Sportsnet Holidays specialises in – packaging official tickets with local accommodation and exclusive experiences to connect fans with their favourite events and destinations around the world.

Sportsnet has been doing this for over 25 years and utilises partnerships with many of the biggest players in the world of sports to create travel experiences you often can't get anywhere else.

Sound like something your clients would be interested in?

The good news is that Sportsnet offers healthy commissions to travel agents for reselling travel packages to events such as the Australian Open, Melbourne Cup Carnival, Singapore Grand Prix and Isle of Man TT... just to name a few! For example, do you know someone who would love to book a trip to Perth for UFC 305? Well, unfortunately tickets have sold out for this event. But as the exclusive travel package provider for UFC 305, Sportsnet's is now the only place you can find a ticket, paired with quality accommodation and an exclusive dinner function. Then you can add flights plus pre- and post-event activities to suit your client's specific needs.

With dozens of events currently available to resellers, Sportsnet is encouraging travel agents to browse their catalogue of events and sign up to join their monthly travel agent newsletter for the latest information, updates and special offers.

START EARNING COMMISSIONS TODAY

Browse Sportsnet's catalogue of currently available events and learn more about how you can start earning a commission on Sportsnet travel packages today.

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