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Win TraveLeague tix

GLOBAL Touring wants to reward advisors for their big efforts this year by offering a chance to win free tickets to the Xmas TraveLeague luncheon on Wed in Melbourne.

The first to email b.hale@topdeck.travel will win one of three tickets up for grabs.

GMTC appoints debut GM

GREECE & Mediterranean Travel Centre (GMTC) has appointed Darren Evans (pictured) to the newly created role of GM.

The move will not affect the involvement of owner Halina Kubica in her business, with Evans to instead help her shoulder some of the responsibilities of the running the growing GMTC.

Evans was most recently Helloworld Travel's Regional Account Manager for NSW/ACT & Queensland, prior to which he served for more than 18 years as Viva Holidays' States Sales Manager NSW/ACT, back when the brand was operated under



the Qantas Holidays banner.

GMTC formerly employed a Chief Executive Officer, Joe Karbo (TD 03 May 2023), for a brief period, however it is understood this role will be different.

The company specialises in travel to Greece, the Mediterranean, and various destinations in the Middle East, and was founded more than 20 years ago. MS

Do Britain differently

VIVA Holidays is inspiring travellers to experience Britain differently by opting for one of its unique packages.

Agents can also win a \$2,000 Viva Holidays voucher if they become the brand's top seller of Britain product - more on p6.

collette
GO EVERYWHERE
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FINAL DAYS!
SALE ENDS 11 DEC

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*Conditions Apply

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of the latest travel news, a photo page from Silversea, plus full pages from:

- Viva Holidays
- Treasures of the South Pacific

Qantas Christmas Giveaway

Share your story to win return flights anywhere in Australia

Do you have a heartwarming story of connection made possible by travel in 2024? We want to hear from you!

Share either your story, or one of your customers', and you could win return flights to any Qantas destination within Australia to connect with a loved one.*

*Competition closes 11:59pm (AEDT) on 17 December 2024. T&Cs apply

Enter now

QANTAS Spirit of Australia

Tahiti
"DREAM BIG"
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Win One of Five Trips for 2 to The Islands of Tahiti

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SAVE UP TO \$8,400* PER COUPLE
Book by 13 Dec 2024

*T&Cs apply

AGENT INCENTIVE: \$150 DIGITAL MASTERCARD

DISCOVER THE ISLANDS OF TAHITI

EXPLORE NOW

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When Nickel turns to gold

FIJI Airways Regional General Manager Australia John Nickel has marked his half century in aviation this week.

At the age of 18, Nickel's flare for accounting saw him recruited to be a costing clerk in Samoa with Polynesian Airlines in 1974.

His skills saw him quickly promoted through the ranks and



transferred to the Samoan capital of Apia, before moving to the big smoke of Auckland in a more senior accounts position.

Nickel continued with Polynesian Airlines (later rebranded as Samoa Airways) for 31 years, in that time rising to the role of Regional Manager.

After a few shorter stints with World Aviation Systems and VA joint venture Polynesian Blue, Nickel took on the role of Commercial Manager with Fiji Airways in 2010.

He was promoted Regional GM for Australia in 2016. **AB**

Nickel is **pictured** with TravelManagers Belinda Hackett.

Optus flight roaming

OPTUS customers on eligible plans can now access 5GB of data to use in 24 hours on in-flight roaming with selected airlines.

For a fee of \$5, Optus is offering travellers an affordable in-flight roaming option on 19 major airlines, including Emirates, Cathay Pacific, Singapore Airlines, Malaysian Airlines, Lufthansa and Etihad Airways.

The deal is in collaboration with AeroMobile and applies to customers on Choice Plus plans.

Salter Bros to list

MELBOURNE-BASED property manager Salter Brothers is pressing ahead with plans to list a hospitality vehicle on the Australian Securities Exchange by 2026, *The Australian* reports.

The company, which revealed a rebrand last month (**TD 28** Nov), is aiming to build its hotel portfolio into the largest hospitality vehicle in the Asia-Pacific, with more than \$3 billion worth of properties in the pipeline over the next five years.

Salter Brothers will reportedly raise funds privately via convertible notes to investors from early next year, before an ASX listing of key hotels in 2026.

Christmas Treasures

TREASURES of the South Pacific is wishing everyone in the Australian travel sector a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday break - see **page seven** to view its very festive message.



TALK about a tough commute, a Chinese student has revealed that he takes a 8,800km flight every week from Dezhou to attend face-to-face classes in Melbourne.

The 28-year-old student, Guangli Xu, shared a video on social platform Douyin entitled 'Challenging the world's longest commute to classes'.

So why would a person subject themselves to such a long journey every week?

No, it's not the air miles. Xu claimed his regular long air journeys were justified by the high and rising monthly living costs in Melbourne.

Between Aug and Oct, Xu made 11 trips, with each round-trip costing around \$1,500, lower than his rent and food bill would cost.

Bunnik Tours

We're here for **You** & your clients

📍 Clients on our 'Turkey in Depth' tour enjoying a hot air balloon ride over Cappadocia

"... We like the balance of their tours — pace, sights, culture, accommodation standards and activities..."

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IATA rebukes compo plan

THE International Air Transport Association (IATA) has expressed its sharp disappointment with a US decision to push ahead with a compensation scheme for airline delays and cancellations.

The US Department of Transportation (DOT) is currently seeking comment on the proposal, which would include airlines paying passengers extra cash compensation for flights scrapped from the schedule, as well as covering rebooking fees, meals, overnight accommodation, and transportation expenses.

In condemning the move, IATA said that similar schemes in Europe and Canada have proven “completely ineffective” in reducing underlying delays or cancellations, the majority of which it said are outside the control of carriers.

“In Europe, the EU261 regulation, on which the DOT proposal is based, costs airlines over US\$5 billion a year, and these costs continue to rise and are eventually paid by consumers through higher fares and reduced choice,” IATA argued.

The aviation body has called on the US Government to

dispense with plans to roll back deregulation and instead focus on addressing the root causes of delays and cancellations.

IATA said these include factors under its control, like understaffed and outdated air traffic control systems.

Among the key terms of the DOT proposal is for airlines operating in the US to pay at least US\$200 in cash compensation, depending on how long flights are delayed, capping out at US\$775 for delays of nine hours or more.

“Now that we are on the other side of the pandemic and air travel is breaking records, we must continue to advance pax protections,” US Transport Secretary Pete Buttigieg said. *AB*

Queen’s makeover

CUNARD has announced it will transform *Queen Elizabeth* ahead of her inaugural Caribbean program in 2025.

The makeover will see the ship’s interiors and exteriors refreshed, as well as the introduction of The Pavilion Wellness Cafe, which debuted earlier this year on Cunard’s *Queen Anne*.

Bunnik hosts Sri Lanka famil



SMALL tour specialist Bunnik Tours has wrapped up its first famil since COVID, a six-day trip for 10 Helloworld agents to discover the beauty of Sri Lanka. During the trip, the guests had the chance to experience some of the offerings from Bunnik’s ‘Sri Lankan Discovery’ and ‘Sri Lanka In-Style’ itineraries.

A highlight included a traditional culinary experience in a remote village, where locals showcased their unique cooking process, and advisors enjoyed the fruits of the effort at a lunch afterwards.

Other key moments included a visit to a local school, where Bunnik donated supplies to children in need; an elephant safari at the Minneriya National Park; and a visit to the famous Lion Rock of Sigiriya, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its spectacular views.

“By immersing in local communities and participating in culturally rich experiences, the agents could appreciate how our small group tours offer special experiences that go beyond the traditional tourist trail,” said Bunnik Tours’ National Sales Manager Zoe Francis, who hosted the famil.

“It was fantastic to be back on the ground, exploring all that Sri Lanka has to offer alongside our valued travel partners.”

To wrap up, agents visited Bunnik Tours’ local office, where they received training on the company’s destinations and small group tour benefits. *JHM.*

Pictured enjoying a sunset drink in the wild are: Zoe Francis; Sharyn Hinton; Georgie McCracken; Marilyn Stojanoski; Jessica Maclannan; Natasha Orpwood; Shannah Hohaia; Cristy Joslin; Toni Sarich; Lyndell Edwards; and tour guide Priya.

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FAMIL

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Join a supportive, fun and passionate team.

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Email your resume and cover letter to careersaunz@amawaterways.com

Silver Nova debuts in Sydney & Hobart

SILVER Nova guests, including travel agents, media, Silversea executives and other industry stakeholders, enjoyed highly anticipated calls to Sydney and Hobart before sailing on to New Zealand for the first time.

In Hobart, guests can embark on a day trip to The Bowmont, a heritage building on the banks of the Huon River, where renowned chef Analiese Gregory hosted an interactive cooking masterclass.

This was an immersive exploration of local produce and foraging, followed by a lunch of local specialities, served with the finest local wine.

This season *Silver Nova's* guests will dive deep into the vibrant cities and magical landscapes of Australia and New Zealand on seven sailings—ranging from 16 to 18 days until 24 Feb next year. *Silver Nova* will then return to Asia until Apr 2025.



SILVER Nova's crew welcomes guests during Nova's debut in Sydney.



SILVER Nova sails to Sydney at dusk.

KEY Trade and MICE partners hosted by Maria Bernardo and Cass Kerr (Silversea) at Marquee on Deck 10.



MELANIE Carter, TravelManagers; Karen Hamilton, Anywhere Travel; Anoushka Kudav, Silversea; Captain Mino Pontillo, *Silver Nova*; Trudy Rice, Time Flies Travel; Lisa Maddox, Spencer Travel; and Adam Townson, Travel Associates.



ADAM Townson, Travel Associates enjoying a S.A.L.T. cooking demo.



TREVOR Stevens, Phil Hoffman Travel; Natalie Morgan, Cruiseabout West Lakes; and Jennifer Reeves, Phil Hoffman Travel.



LISA Maddox, Spencer Travel, featured on the right with her mother Wendy and Chef Analiese Gregory at S.A.L.T. Shore Excursion in Tasmania.



GILLIAN Woodley, Travel Associates Cruise Boutique Hobart, and partner.



GEORGINA Glass, Travel Associates at Home; Anoushka Kudav, Silversea; and Adam Townson, Travel Associates.



CHEF Analiese Gregory hosts an interactive cooking masterclass guests during the S.A.L.T. Shore Excursion at The Bowmont, a heritage building on the banks of the Huon River.



BROCHURES

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brochures@traveldaily.com.au



Aurora Expeditions - Antarctica 2026-27
Aurora Expeditions has released a new brochure showcasing its freshly unveiled Antarctica 2026-27 season. The season features 27 unique voyages ranging from nine to 34 days, including several special edition expeditions, catering to adventure enthusiasts, photographers, science and enrichment seekers and women travellers. Returning are the best-selling 'Spirit of Antarctica' and 'South Georgia, Falklands & Antarctic Odyssey' itineraries along with fly voyages the 'Antarctic Explorer' and 'Antarctic Explorer Express'. The cruise line has also introduced the new 10-day 'Taste of Antarctica', perfect for time-conscious travellers.

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Viva Holidays - Singapore & Malaysia 2025/26
Viva Holidays has released its 2025/26 Singapore & Malaysia brochure earlier than ever, to showcase the best that these South East Asian hotspots have to offer. From history and heritage to world-class shopping and natural attractions, Singapore and Malaysia has plenty to see and do for every type of traveller. There are dedicated sections for each destination, including Singapore's Sentosa Island and Malaysia's Penang and Kuala Lumpur, as well as an expanded range of luxury hotels to make clients' stay even more memorable, as well as activity recommendations suitable for the whole family.

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Atlas Ocean Voyages - 2026 Summer
Yacht expedition cruising brand, Atlas Ocean Voyages, has unveiled a new brochure highlighting its 2026 expeditions program. The line's new northern summer 2026 program features 26 sailings of between seven and 14 nights aboard Atlas Ocean Voyages' three luxury expedition ships. The new portfolio offers 28 new ports of call in countries like Finland and Sweden, more than 25 overnight stays in ports like Dubrovnik, Venice, Bordeaux and Stockholm, and more than 70 late evening departures, allowing guests extra time to explore and more immersive and authentic experiences.

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Australia now painted green



THE team at Tourism Ireland has just wrapped up a roadshow around Australia, sharing the new and diverse experiences the country has to offer travellers.

Some of the key messages Tourism Ireland shared with guests included discussing the country's off-the-beaten-path destinations in Northern Ireland and the benefits of visiting during shoulder season.

"Our sales mission is an important element of our program of activity in Australia and New Zealand this year - to highlight the many things to see and do, and all that is new and exciting, on a holiday on the island of Ireland," explained Sofia Hansson, Tourism Ireland's Manager Australia and NZ.

"It gives our tourism partners from the island of Ireland an excellent platform to inform and influence the travel professionals they meet about what Ireland has to offer and, importantly, to encourage them to include the destination in their future programs," she continued.

More than 320 guests attended Tourism Ireland's four-city roadshow, including travel agents, industry executives and

media, who were joined by Alison Metcalf, Tourism Ireland's Executive Vice President of North America, Australia and NZ.

Suppliers from Ireland took part, including AC Tours Ireland, Activities Ireland; Adams & Butler; County Kildare Failte; Griffin Group; Irish National Stud and Gardens; Irish Rugby Tours; O'Donoghue Ring Collection; Railtours Ireland First Class; Titanic Belfast; and Shenanigans Walks Kilkenny.

Traditional dancing and music entertained the guests to bring culture to the events. *JHM*

Scenic Getaway

SCENIC Group's luxury brands, Scenic and Emerald Cruises, have expanded their 18-year partnership with Channel 9's *Getaway* to launch a new summer series, *Great Getaways*.

Showcasing Scenic Group's portfolio of luxury products, the specials will take audiences to pristine and remote destinations around the world.

The series kicked off last week, with the one-hour episodes to run until 26 Dec at 7.30pm, and prize giveaways also on offer.

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📍 Oxfordshire, England

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📍 LONDON - BATH - LONDON

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- 24-hour Hop-On Hop-Off Bus ticket in London and Bath
- Full day tour to Windsor, Stonehenge and Oxford
- Return rail tickets from London to Bath
- Return transfers from London Heathrow Airport to hotel

6 NIGHTS FROM **\$2,809*** PER PERSON TWIN SHARE

7 DAY EXPLORE WALES SELF-DRIVE

📍 LONDON - CARDIFF - PEMBROKESHIRE
- CAERNARFON - CRICKHOWELL -
CARDIFF - LONDON

INCLUDES:

- 6 nights at hand-picked hotels
- Breakfast daily
- Admission to Cardiff and Conwy Castle

6 NIGHTS FROM **\$1,605*** PER PERSON TWIN SHARE

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Treasures
of the South Pacific

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM US TO YOU!

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On behalf of all of the Treasures of the South Pacific, along with our incredible partners, we wish you an amazing holiday season, and look forward to seeing you on our friendly shores in 2025.

