

# Travel Daily

First with the news

Wednesday 7th Feb 2024

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## Silversea's big value

**AVAILABLE** until the end of the month, Silversea is offering \$3,000 in savings per guest on its all-inclusive voyages.

The discounted fares include private executive transfers, shore excursions, butler service, and plenty more - see **page eight** for all of the details.

## TA takes Big Apple bite

**FRANK** Sinatra called it "the city so nice, they named it twice" and New York City is now firmly on Travel Associates' radar after the agent group struck a deal with the Big Apple's chief marketing organisation this week.

In partnership with New York City Tourism + Conventions, the luxury specialist network has launched a coordinated joint marketing effort promoting "one-of-a-kind" luxury holidays and high-end touring experiences across the five boroughs.

Packages to be brought to market will be exclusive to Travel Associates' advisor network and

will spotlight "hidden cultural gems" and insider lux experiences.

In addition to a hallmark six-day Signature Itinerary for the city (**CLICK HERE**), Travel Associates will also schedule a series of trade and client events around Australia to bring them directly to the door of discerning travellers.

New York City Tourism + Conventions Chief Marketing Officer, Nancy Mammana, said Australia is a market providing 586,000 visitors to NYC this year.

"NYC is home to a multitude of unique luxury experiences, which we look forward to showcasing to Australian travellers alongside Travel Associates and their expert advisors," Mammana added.

Travel Associates General Manager, Australia and New Zealand, Rachel Kingswell, said the "entire advisor network is excited to be part of this New York City campaign for 2024 and share more luxury hidden gems with their clients". *ML*

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features seven pages of the latest travel industry news including our **Luxury** feature page, plus a full page from **Silversea** and a product update about Asia from **MW Tours**.



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Te Puia Geysers \*T&C's apply

## Choose MW Tours

**MW TOURS** is highlighting its comprehensive range of South East Asia and China tours, which encompass Vietnam, Cambodia, and the Philippines.

Learn more about what's on offer by heading to **page nine**.

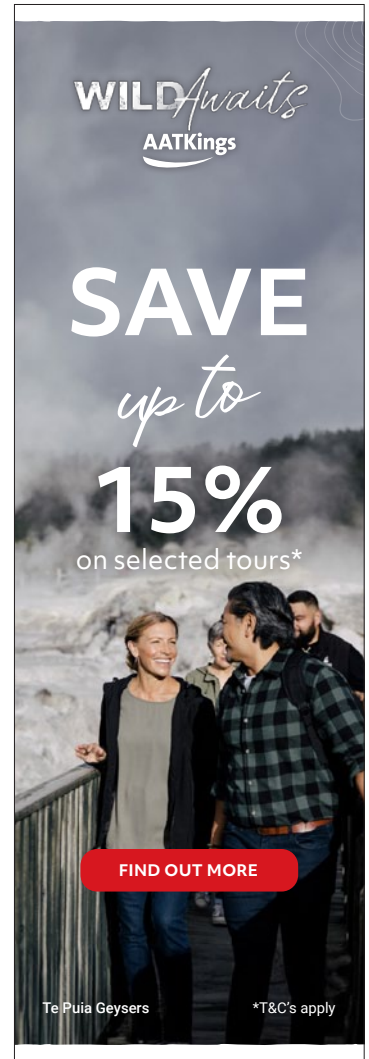


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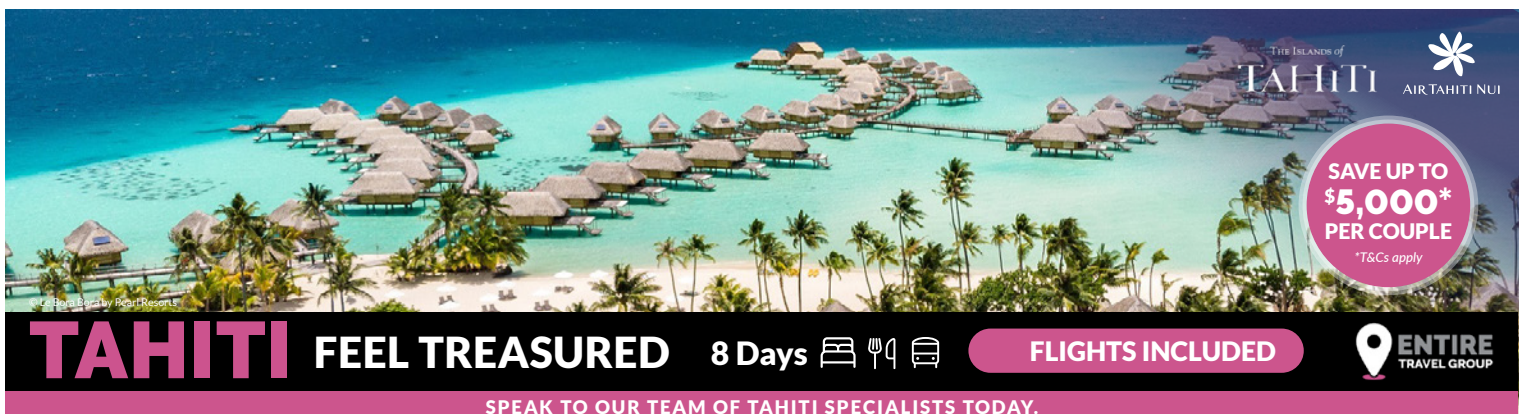



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# Travel Daily

Wednesday 7th Feb 2024

## Lights, camera, Coral

**CORAL** Expeditions is launching a new TV series called *Expedition Kimberley*, which will showcase a 10-night voyage in the WA region aboard *Coral Discoverer*.

The first part of the series will air on Network Ten at 3.30pm this Sun in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth.

 Wendy Wu Tours.

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## Airlines face new trends

**MORE** than 80% of airlines are expecting to have cutting-edge biometric ID management technology in place by 2026, according to SITA's 2023 *Air Transport IT Insights* report.

While the majority of airlines around the world still rely on manual ID verification processes at boarding, SITA's latest report suggests digitalisation is "gaining traction" to prevent bottlenecks at the gates and help redistribute staff to more complex tasks.

The report also showed that carriers are embracing touchless boarding at a faster pace than ever before, with a third flagging plans to implement the tech by the end of 2026.

If the forecast is achieved, it will see two-third of all airlines offer touchless boarding for customers.

The holy grail of speedy airport processing, single token technology, is showing slower signs of implementation however, with only 17% of carriers



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## Indo travel warning

**THE** Federal Government is warning Australian travellers to Indonesia to exercise added caution in the lead-up to the country's federal election taking place on 14 Feb.

Aussies are being advised to avoid areas hosting protests and monitor local media for updates.

 Expedia TAAAP

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## Have your say on skills

**TRAVEL** business owners and managers are invited to have their say on the workforce skills needed for the sector via a new survey from the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA).

The association is calling for as many submissions as possible to help with a major workforce and skills initiative designed to lobby federal and state politicians for ongoing support into the matter.

In the survey, questions focus on current and ongoing travel consultant shortages in each agency, as well as training needs.

Respondents will also be asked for their thoughts on current government support available and the programs in place that are both useful or need changing.

Data from the survey will be used in ongoing discussions and budget submissions at both state and federal levels.

"ATIA calls on all industry participants facing recruitment or

training challenges to contribute their valuable insights," ATIA Chief Executive Dean Long said.

"Your participation in the survey is crucial in maintaining our recent successes and shaping an effective workforce strategy for the travel industry." *ML*

Take the survey [HERE](#).

### A festive Albatross

**ALBATROSS** Tours has expanded its European Festive touring program with four brand-new Christmas and New Year's itineraries for 2024/25.

The new tours will take travellers across Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia, and Croatia, where they will experience festive activities and experiences.

Albatross has also announced a new agent incentive (*TD* 15 Jan), offering a tour for two valued at over \$14,000 on one of four specially selected summer tours.

## Vietnam Express

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Ho Chi Minh City  
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### NT cruises to \$65m

**THE** cruise sector is expected to inject \$65 million into the Northern Territory economy during the 2023-24 cruise season.

More than 100 cruise and expedition ships will have visited Darwin by the end of the season, representing a total passenger capacity of 60,000.

"The cruise ship industry makes a significant contribution to the local economy - cruise passengers dine in our cafes and restaurants, shop at local retailers and of course book tours to explore our beautiful tropical city and beyond," NT Minister for Tourism and Hospitality Joel Bowden said.

The figures released by the NT Govt coincide with P&O's *Pacific Adventure* making its maiden arrival in Darwin yesterday.

The Top End released its *Cruise Tourism Strategy* last year which indicated a need to take a more proactive approach to cruise tourism development and attracting new operators.



[LEARN MORE](#)

### Railbookers in Peru

**RAILBOOKERS** is expanding to South America with 21 new itineraries exploring Peru.

All of Railbookers' itineraries in Peru are now available into next year, offering travellers a range from eight to 25 days in length.

The company has also put together a 'South America by Train' brochure ([access HERE](#)).



### VA MAX impacts?

**VIRGIN** Australia has informed *TD* that it is currently working with Boeing to confirm if there will be any delivery impacts to its B737 MAX order schedule after the manufacturer confirmed misdrilled holes were found on some of the model's fuselages.

Boeing said that at least 50 aircraft will be delayed because of the latest issue.



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## Etihad status match

**ETIHAD** Airways has launched a new status match offer to Australian residents, allowing members of 20 airline frequent flyer programs to convert their existing membership into a status trial with Etihad Guest.

In a partnership between Etihad Guest and Loyalty Status Co, the offer grants successful applicants with three months as an Etihad Guest Silver or Gold member, which can be extended to a full year by taking an eligible EY flight.

Eligible airlines in the offer include Qantas, British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Emirates, Singapore Airlines, United Airlines, Thai Airways and more.

**CLICK HERE** for the full list of participating airline programs.

## New oneworld CEO

**AIRLINE** industry stalwart Nathaniel Pieper will take on the role of CEO at the oneworld alliance, effective 01 Apr.

Pieper is currently the SVP of Fleet, Finance and Alliances at oneworld member Alaska Airlines, and has previously held executive roles at Delta and Northwest.

## Change Makers returns in '24



**FIFTEEN** agents from Australia and New Zealand will be whisked to an as-yet-unnamed destination to attend the 2024 G Adventures' Change Makers Summit, the operator revealed this week.

Places can be earned via the company's 2024 Change Makers Incentive, which returns this year and awards one entry into a draw for every traveller booked onto a G Adventures itinerary.

The top 10 selling agents from each region will automatically qualify to attend, with five more selected as wildcard entrants who

complete G Adventures product training or raise funds for its non-profit partner, Planterra.

The community tourism brand's third Change Makers GX Summit will host 75 agents from around the world to witness first-hand the impact of community tourism while enjoying enlightening panel discussions and themed parties at iconic venues.

Last year's Change Makers GX Summit in Peru included a party at an Incan temple and a concert by The Village People. *ML*

**Pictured:** G Adventures Founder Bruce Poon Tip mingling with winning agents from around the world at last year's Change Makers Summit.

## FJ rejects allegations

**FIJI** Airways has strongly denied allegations made against it by the Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption in relation to certain Israel charter flights it operated in Sep and Oct last year.

The complaint made against the carrier and its Board of Directors concerns the legality of a Deed of Forbearance and guarantee entered into between Fiji Airways and the charterer, who struggled to meet its payment obligations for the charter flights.

The Fiji flag carrier has asserted it "stands by its ethical business practices and is taking legal advice in respect to the false and defamatory allegations".

## HLO Britain incentive

**HELLOWORLD** is continuing a partnership with VisitBritain via its Viva Holidays wholesale brand through a new campaign.

Over a period of five weeks, the promotion will present exclusive offerings and incentives for agents until 22 Mar, including the chance to win a trip for two to Britain - details **HERE**.

The marketing push encourages Aussies to "Experience Britain Differently" in 2024, highlighting year-round city packages, self-drive itineraries, independent rail journeys, guided touring, and events across England, Scotland and Wales - learn more **HERE**.

Agents can also participate in masterclasses across the country from next week onwards, with trivia, treats and British themed prizes up for grabs.

## FLIGHT EXECUTIVE, BRISBANE

Imagine Holidays are looking for a Flights Executive to work in our Aviation team. If you have extensive experience working with a GDS (preferably Galileo), a solid understanding of fares and ticketing and are currently employed within the airline or travel industry, then we have the opportunity for you. If you have the following, then we very much want to hear from you:

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## GA-QR c'share flight

**QATAR Airways'** codeshare partner, Garuda Indonesia, will begin its daily direct flight between Jakarta and Doha from 04 Apr, with bookings now open.

The new service, which will be operated using B777-300 aircraft, will allow travellers from Indonesia access to Qatar Airways' network of over 170 destinations, including cities in the Middle East, Europe & Africa.

Additionally, Qatar customers will enjoy more travel options to destinations across Indonesia, further boosting tourism between the two countries.

## Plaza lands in Kenya

**PLAZA Premium Group** has this week announced the opening of its new exclusive lounge at Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

Boasting a capacity of 150 seats, Plaza Premium Lounge Nairobi offers high-speed wi-fi, charging stations & dedicated workspaces.

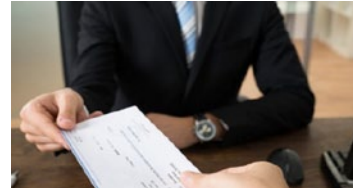
## Workers eye salary boost

**CLOSE** to a third of employees in the Asia Pacific and the Middle East's travel and tourism sectors have flagged higher salaries as a "top priority" when considering a change of job, a new report from human resources company ACI HR Solutions has found.

The *Salary and Employment Trends 2024* survey canvassed the thoughts of 750 travel and tourism workers across the two regions - including a number of Aussies - and reported that 68% of respondents had their salary increased last year, while 62% also received a bonus.

Interestingly, close to half (44%) of staff in travel/tourism currently work from home or are operating in a hybrid model, and while the figure is large, only 14% said remote working was an important factor for job satisfaction.

When looking at Australia's hotel sector, the report predicted Sydney's occupancy levels to be



stronger than what they were in 2023, which the analysis said "makes sense" given the improved CBD booking pace in recent months.

Examining the tourism sector in the region more broadly, the report predicted international tourism is "well on track" to fully recover to pre-pandemic levels by the end of this year, despite economic challenges and uncertainty created by geopolitical tensions. *AB*

## Tasting regional SA

**TASTING** Australia presented by RAA Travel is set to bring some of South Australia's best regional dining venues to the CBD from 03-12 May.

The new Town Square Canteen series will see six esteemed venues, including The Farm Eatery from Barossa, take to Victoria Square in the heart of Adelaide.

South Australia's Minister for Tourism, Zoe Bettison, said the initiative will "make festival goers hungry to discover more of regional SA's warm hospitality and world-class produce".

Visitors can enjoy a main dish, shared side, bread, a glass of wine, authentic hospitality and storytelling for \$49 - more **HERE**.



## Window Seat

**TRAVEL** is in the air this Valentine's Day, with 40% of Australian Zillennials (Gen Zs and Millennials) stating they actively seek romantic connections when travelling.

The new research from Flight Centre Travel Group (FCTG), which looked at responses from Zillennials across Australia, NZ, the UK, South Africa and Canada, found that overall more men said they've experienced love abroad (53%) compared to 42% of women.

It's not all about romance though, with solo travel becoming an increasingly popular way for people to reconnect with themselves.

Most Zillennials from the five countries said they were very or somewhat likely to 'wanderlone' at 60%, with a "soul-searching journey that focuses on self-discovery" holding the most appeal for more than half of that cohort.

"Our research shows that people are seeking and finding love abroad - with each other, and with themselves," FCTG Global Chief Executive James Kavanagh said.

"With Valentine's Day around the corner, the pressure is on for couples to find the perfect gift for one another, and travel is the perfect option."




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### Ponant's Pearl open

**BOOKINGS** are now open for *Paspaley Pearl* by Ponant, the new collaboration between the luxury cruise line and WA's Paspaley pearling family (**TD** 26 Oct 2023).

Currently undergoing a multi-million-dollar renovation, the 30-guest boutique expedition motor yacht will set out on its inaugural 10-night expedition on 10 Jan 2025, from Dili in East Timor to Bali.

*Paspaley Pearl* by Ponant will sail year-round to destinations like Australia's Far North, East Indonesia, the Kimberley, and more.

The duo have also launched a dedicated website with a Yacht Concierge who can provide personalised assistance to guests and travel distributors, [HERE](#).

## RSSC ROLLS OUT ELEVATE TO AU/NZ

**REGENT** Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has officially launched its new travel partner program, Regent Elevate, in Australia and New Zealand, first unveiled by **TD** in Dec last year (**TD** 13 Dec 2023).

The new platform is billed as taking its mutually-beneficial partnership with travel partners to unprecedented heights, and offers a range of additional trade support such as training courses, an online marketing portal, incentives & promotional offers.

The luxury cruise line has packaged up the Elevate program under three key pillars: Insights, Support and Growth.

Insights include training and market research to help target Regent guests, while the Support aspect references enhanced sales and marketing tools.

The third Growth component refers to RSSC's efforts to raise the bar when it comes to



incentives, promotional offers, and competitive commissions.

"We are providing more training, support and incentives, with the desire to assist our travel partners to grow their luxury cruise business and ensure that they continue to thrive in an ever-evolving travel landscape, while delivering exceptional value to clients," said Lisa Pile, Vice President Sales & General Manager, Asia Pacific, RSSC.

"And this is only the beginning, we have many more compelling

Regent Elevate initiatives to be rolled out in 2024," she added.

As part of the Elevate proposition, RSSC University has launched Undergraduate, Bachelor and Master graduate degree levels and new courses.

To celebrate, travel partners will be awarded up to 20 CLIA accreditation points when completing the three degrees, with an additional option to earn a \$100 gift card upon completion of two degrees. **AB**

**Pictured:** *Seven Seas Grandeur*.

### Melia comes to Madrid

**THE** former Hotel Madrid, Atocha located in the Spanish capital's Las Letras district, has undergone a full renovation and will reopen in May as a Melia Collection hotel.

Named Casa de las Artes, Member of Melia Collection, the 137-room luxury property will feature a restaurant-theatre concept, cosy library, private cinema room, landscaped inner courtyard, and a thermal pool, as well as a fitness centre and several versatile meeting rooms.

### Crystal Cruises on theme for 2024 voyages

**CRYSTAL** Cruises has unveiled its collection of themed voyages for 2024, which will be offered on board *Crystal Symphony* and *Crystal Serenity*.

Film and theatre enthusiasts will enjoy a 12-night sailing from Bangkok to Hong Kong, featuring performances from Grammy-nominated Christine Allado and fireside chats with the likes of American movie and TV actor Bruce McGill.

There's also a sailing for golf lovers, departing 18 Jul from Lisbon to Dover, where renowned golf instructors David Leadbetter and Roberto Borgatti will be aboard to help guests perfect their swings.

Crystal Cruises will offer two Broadway themed cruises in Sep, where they will be regaled with performances by American actress and singer Rachel York.

### Silversea promotes

**SILVERSEA** has promoted Massimo Brancaleoni to the role of Senior Vice President, Global Sales & Revenue.

Brancaleoni brings nearly 30 years of experience in the global cruise industry, including executive positions for international companies in Europe and Asia.

He first joined Silversea in Jan 2023 as Senior Vice President, Global Sales.

## #TRAVELINSPO

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**The Sebel Sydney Martin Place** has emerged from its multi-million dollar refurbishment, where guests can now enjoy bespoke luxury upon arrival. The 86-key urban getaway boasts a revitalised reception area, now featuring modernised design details, lighting, and artwork. Each guestroom offers a new look with neutral hues and mustard tones to offer a homely feel - perfect for guests who are staying for prolonged periods.



After completing a full revitalisation of its ballrooms and meeting and event spaces, **The Pfister Hotel** in Milwaukee, US has entered the second phase of its US\$20 million renovation. The first phase saw the historic property's guestrooms restyled with blue and green undertones, updated furnishings inspired by the late 1800s such as brass light fixtures and fringed ottomans, as well as modern luxuries and special art pieces.



The **Kimpton Hotel Monaco Salt Lake City** has begun welcoming guests once again after a four-month renovation. Located in the heart of the Utah City, the revamped property now offers a "clean and updated aesthetic" which blends heritage and modern luxury. Guests can also savour new menus with seasonal ingredients at one of the hotel's three onsite restaurants, the Bambara, and kick back and relax at the newly-unveiled lounge, The Vault.



**Hotel Grace La Margna St. Moritz** has reopened after undergoing an extensive renovation. The Swiss ski resort boasts a new all-day diner, The View, which features floor-to-ceiling windows for sweeping views of the majestic mountains and pine forest surrounding the property. Guests can also head to The Bar for a cosy but vibrant atmosphere while enjoying a drink or two.



**Todos Santos Boutique Hotel** has recently opened its doors, nestled within the hidden oasis of Mexico's Baja Peninsula. The 10-key property offers historic charm, with the heritage landmark - which has a history dating back to 1890 - offering various luxury accommodations, including two spacious suites, the Rosa and the Pillar, each featuring a living room and a private plunge pool.

## The Chat

with Jenny

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## Ovolo rolls out the rainbow



**OVOLO** Woolloomooloo will host an extravagant brunch with Virgin Australia, Lululemon and Absolut Vodka to celebrate Mardi Gras, which will include ice plunge sessions, prize giveaways, and goodie bags for guests.

Taking place in the hotel's onsite venue Alibi Bar and Dining on Sat 02 Mar, the two-hour brunch will be filled with delicious bites and bottomless mimosas, Bloody Marys and espresso martinis.

There will also be entertainment from DJ Victoria Anthony as well as *RuPaul's Drag Race* star, Hollywood Star, and Brissy-based drag queen, The Thin Lizzi, and the chance for the most

fabulously dressed guests to win some great prizes, including flights with Virgin Australia.

Those feeling brave can plunge into Lululemon's 'Ice Bath Recovery' session on Finger Wharf, which will help raise money to support LGBTQIA+ youth.

Guests who book a stay at Ovolo Woolloomooloo over the Mardi Gras weekend will enjoy a disco cocktail on arrival and recovery pack gift bag valued at over \$100.

Tickets to the Mardi Gras Brunch are available for \$99 **HERE**. *JM*

## SkyWest, Contours

**US CARRIER** SkyWest Airlines has acquired a 25% ownership stake in Tennessee-based regional carrier, Contour Airlines.

The arrangement includes an asset-provisioning agreement, which will see SkyWest provide Bombardier CRJ airframes, engines, and rotatable parts.

Additionally, Contour will offer a pilot supply pipeline for SkyWest, which remains around 1,000 pilots short of pre-COVID levels.

## Surfs up at Marriott

**FIJI** Marriott Resort Momi Bay has been named as the official accommodation partner for the World Surf League 2024 Corona Fiji Pro, which will return to the island from 20-29 Aug for the first time in seven years.

The highly anticipated event will see the world's best surfers convene in Cloudbreak, located off the island of Tavarua.

Fiji Marriott Resort Momi Bay will host officials and int'l media throughout the event, as well coordinate the official welcome and prize giving ceremony and sponsored cocktail event.

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# Why Choose South East Asia & China with MW Tours

**MW TOURS** are a renowned and established specialist wholesale tour operator with an extensive range of tours and travel arrangements to South East (SE) Asia and China to suit all travel and budget requirements.

In SE Asia, MW Tour's popular destinations include Vietnam, Cambodia and The Philippines.

The SE Asia region is renowned for its ancient temples, monuments, and UNESCO world Heritage sites such as Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

The people are warm and very welcoming with diverse and colourful cultures best seen at festivals, and the foodies are spoilt for choice.

The beauty of the landscapes is stunning, from the lush rainforests, iconic

rivers, and bays such as the Mekong and Halong Bay, from the breathtaking beaches of the Philippines to the bustling city experiences such as Ho Chi Minh City.

China is very much open and ready for international travellers, and being such a vast country with a rich and diverse culture there is so much to experience.

MW Tours cover the iconic and must see attractions and sites such as the Great Wall of China, the Terracotta Army, the Forbidden City, the Yangtze River, the stunning Shangri-La and Silk Road.

The provinces are all very contrasting with differing cultures, costumes, dynasties and amazing foods. The landscapes are diverse and expansive from iconic mountain ranges, deserts, vast grasslands and renowned rivers. For

nature lovers there are many species to view including the infamous Panda.

With great and efficient transport systems it is easy to travel vast distances easily and quickly.

## NEED ASSISTANCE?

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