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Taibel to cruise out

VETERAN Holland America Line, P&O Cruises and Seabourn VP of Sales and Partnerships, Ryan Taibel, will depart the Carnival Australia group after 14 years. After an internal restructure, Taibel said the time was right now “to pursue other opportunities”.

Hottest NTIA year ever

MORE than 1,700 nominations have been received from across the travel industry for the 2024 National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA), with the total pool setting a new benchmark for the event.

A total of 1,715 nominations were received by the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) across 35 categories, with the next step seeing nominees contacted to officially add them to the award process for their specific category.

Travel advisors have shown their support for the role played by their preferred sales professionals, with 180 nominations received for the ‘Most Outstanding Sales Executive’ division.

Another of the most hotly-contested awards for 2024 was the ‘Most Outstanding Travel Agency Manager’ which attracted 104 peer nominations.

The ‘Most Outstanding Leisure Travel Agency - Single Location’ and ‘Most Popular River Cruise’ categories were also very well subscribed, drawing 62 and 53 peer nominations respectively.

“This year’s record-breaking number of nominations shows NTIA engagement has never been stronger,” said ATIA Chief Executive Officer, Dean Long.

“The high level of engagement and the number of nominations reflect the anticipation and excitement of Australia’s travel businesses for NTIA 2024.”

For categories requiring a submission, the portal opens on 01 Jul, while industry voting for applicable categories begins on 22 Jul, with the gala ceremony taking place in Sydney on 26 Oct.

Silversea immersion

SAVINGS of up to \$6,000 per suite are available now across a variety of sailings with Silversea.

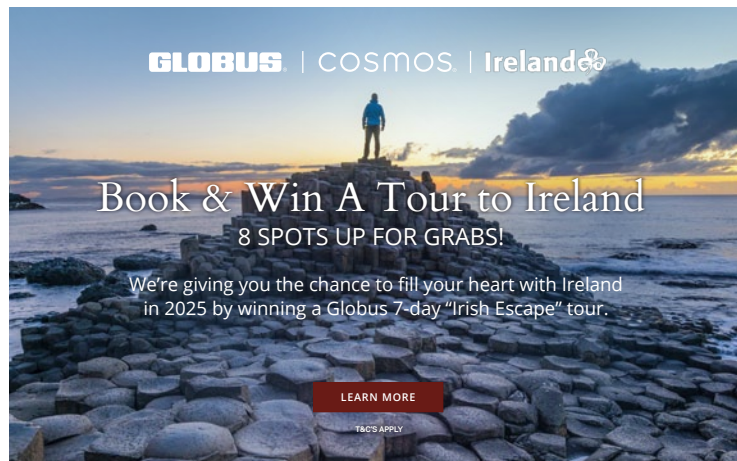
Clients can also enjoy a 15% reduced deposit on the line’s door-to-door all-inclusive fares.

For more details, see **page nine** of today’s *Travel Daily*.



Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of the latest travel industry news including our **Luxury** page, plus a full page from **Silversea**.



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Link's birthday bonanza

LINK Travel Group will complete its sophomore year with a windfall as 10 new members join the burgeoning group from 01 Jul (*TD* breaking news).

The joint venture today unveiled seven new member agencies dotted around Australia to build on the addition of Maxims Travel, Solve Travel Management and Lexus Travel, all introduced earlier this year (*TD* 13 Mar).

New members cover capital and regional centres in five states, beginning with Atour Travel Service in Sydney; Y Travel in Melbourne and Aus World Travel in Northbridge in the Perth CBD.

Two new members call Adelaide home, including Angas Travel in Rose Park and We Explored, based in Port Noarlunga.

Regional Australia is represented by Travel Focus Group in the NSW south coast town of Gerringong, and Gregor & Lewis Bespoke Travel on the Sunshine Coast.



"We'll be celebrating our birthday with these 10 outstanding new agents which have been strategically chosen to add strength and substance to the group," said Link Travel General Manager, Scott Darlow. "The businesses themselves are of the highest quality but more importantly, the owners are all successful, highly driven and ambitious, traits that fit Link perfectly," he added.

Pictured is Y Travel Directors Yvonne and Allan Verstandig with Melinda Gregor from Gregor & Lewis Bespoke Travel. *ML*

Tonetto joins Hilton

HILTON has announced the appointment of Daniella Tonetto (**pictured**) as Senior Commercial Director for Australasia.

From 01 Jul, Tonetto will maximise revenue opportunities as Hilton continues to grow its portfolio across the region.

She boasts a wealth of experience in the hospitality industry, including her most recent role as Director - Hotels Axsia HTL.

Tonetto also held several senior commercial roles with Starwood Hotels & Resorts and Marriot International across Asia, Australia, and the Pacific Region.



Travel Daily
ON LOCATION

LISBON

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Silversea, which is hosting a VIP shakedown cruise in the lead-up to the naming of *Silver Ray*.

THE big day has finally arrived. Silversea's impressive *Silver Ray* will formally join the fleet today at its official naming ceremony in Lisbon before setting sail on its debut itineraries in the Mediterranean and shifting to the Americas later in the year.

The ultra-luxury cruise line has spared no expense with its latest venture, which boasts an impressive space-to-guest ratio. Guests in some suites will enjoy amazing 270° views via thanks to new spacious suites.

malaysia airlines

ACCOUNT MANAGER, DIRECT CHANNEL

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Malaysia Airlines has an exciting opportunity for an Account Manager, Direct Channel to join our Australian and New Zealand Team.

This role will focus on managing and growing a portfolio of strong customer relationships, identifying new business opportunities, and developing sales strategies to achieve revenue targets.

If you are a proactive individual with a proven sales track record and experience in account management, please [Click Here to apply](#).

Successful candidates will receive competitive remuneration and generous travel benefits.

Application Close at 5pm, Friday 28 June 2024.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Only applicants with the legal right to live and work in Australia will be considered. No recruitment agency

Rail Europe

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Eurail confirmations

What the info means: Watch this short [video](#) explaining the items in a Eurail confirmation email, including its validity, the mPass number and the rail planning resource.

mPass activation reminder: You can share this [link](#) and the [PDF](#) with step-by-step instructions from the resource page with your client.

Expert Tip: Most mandatory seat reservations can be booked through the agent portal. [Click here](#) to discover in a few simple steps how to book seat reservations.

agent.raileurope.com/contact-us | jhooper@raileurope.com (VIC, TAS, SA) | groberson@raileurope.com (NSW, ACT, QLD, WA & NT)

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Hanoi links to the Harbour City



LOW-COST carrier Vietjet has given Sydneysiders twice as many reasons to visit Vietnam with the launch this week of its second direct route from Sydney.

In addition to its daily flights between Sydney to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietjet is now connecting the NSW capital directly with Hanoi on a twice-weekly basis on one of its Airbus A330 aircraft.

The new route, which flies on Wed and Sat, is the seventh route Vietjet has launched to Australia in just over one year.

Pictured above welcoming the debut of the new service are Greg Botham, Sydney Airport; Nguyen Thanh Ha, Vietjet; Kathryn Illy, Destination NSW; Do Xuan Quang, Vietjet and Nguyen Phu Hoa, Vietnam Deputy Consul General.

The Chat

with Jenny



Travel Daily

A conversation with Michelle Ashcroft

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SQ compensation

SINGAPORE Airlines has sent offers of compensation to injured travellers from SQ321 on 20 May, which was forced to make an emergency landing in Bangkok.

Travellers who suffered minor injuries will be eligible to receive US\$10,000 (AU\$15,135) on top of a full refund of their airfare and delay compensation in line with EU and UK regulations.

Those with more serious injuries have been invited to discuss their individual needs with the airline, with advances of US\$25,000 paid to support their immediate needs on top of their final payout.

Rail Europe e-brox

A NEW digital collection of multi-day itineraries covering single and multiple countries has been launched by Rail Europe.

The digital guide is designed for agents to use as a sample or base when compiling itineraries for their clients - **CLICK HERE** to view.



Window Seat

YOU'VE heard of sky writing, but how about sea writing?

Fiji's Malolo Waters, just near Plantation Island Resort, is now home to the largest word ever written under the sea.

The giant 'bula' is not just a friendly message though - it's a new 'super' coral nursery initiative developed as part of the UNESCO-endorsed Reefs of Hope program.

The Fijian greeting (which also means 'life') is written in heat-adapted corals, which now have a much better chance of surviving after being relocated from jeopardised coral populations in the extreme shallows nearby.



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Bluey joins the hunt for itravel



QUEENSLAND'S Viva Travel Holdings has become the newest member of the itravel community, further sharpening the group's recent strong growth trajectory in the Sunshine State.

The addition of Viva Travel Holdings brings with it not just its namesake travel management business but also Supported

Travel eXperiences, a specialist brand in accessible travel.

Viva Travel Holdings Co-Owner Andrew Hagar said he was very impressed with itravel's innovation and focus on delivering tangible value back to its members. *ML*

Hagar is **pictured** right with Supported Travel eXperiences Co-Founder, Yann Charavel.

Ponant names new CEO

FRENCH luxury expedition cruise line Ponant has continued its corporate restructure in the local market, today announcing the promotion of Deb Corbett to the role of CEO Asia Pacific.

The change comes following a decision by Chris Hall to depart the business at the end of Jun on the completion of his secondment at the cruise line's headquarters in Marseille.

Corbett brings more than 30 years in cruise and travel to her new position leading Ponant's Asia Pacific office, of which the past seven have been with the French luxury expedition line.

With her new responsibilities, Corbett will now report to Ponant Deputy CEO Global Business, Belinda Hindmarsh.

Further corporate changes will see Maxime Farrenq appointed as Ponant's new Chief Operating Officer for APAC.

Ponant's Director of Sales,

Julie Rogers, expands her sales territory further to include Japan and Hong Kong, which comes five weeks after taking on Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand markets.

Other changes made to the team include new duties for David Marionneau, who takes on a newly-created role of Director of Maritime Operations.

The team will continue to be advised by Global Senior Strategic Advisor and Honorary Chairwoman, Sarina Bratton, who is also spearheading the launch of the forthcoming Paspaley Pearl by Ponant operation.

Commenting on the change, Bratton said the line was fortunate to have such high-calibre executives to oversee the Asia Pacific region.

"[Corbett's] business experience, professionalism, and industry knowledge will ensure our growth plans are in good hands," Bratton said. *ML*

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Myrmell is back

JOURNEY Beyond has named industry leader Sture Myrmell as its new Chief Operating Officer, **TD** can reveal, bringing the former Carnival Corporation President back to Australia.

Myrmell's most recent role saw him move to the United Kingdom in 2021 to head up Carnival Corporation, some 14 years after having first relocated Down Under back in 2007.

He will return to Australia this Aug, joining the Journey Beyond team in Adelaide, and reporting to Chief Executive, Chris Tallent.

Myrmell, who brings over 30 years of industry experience, will take on the overall leadership of all of Journey Beyond's operational businesses, as well as marketing, sales, and more.

Agents dress the part in Bhutan



SEVEN lucky Australian travel advisors, and one from Turkey, were recently invited to experience the best of what the Kingdom of Bhutan has to offer.

Invited by Blue Poppy Tours, which is represented in Australia by Jones and Co Collection, the group delved into some cultural highlights and more mainstream activities such as white water rafting through a canyon.

The group also explored some of the luxury hotels and resorts available to travellers, including Como Uma Paro, Six Senses Thimphu, known as the 'Palace in the Sky', and Pemako, a luxury lodge set in the Thimphu Valley.

Other activities on the schedule included white water rafting and a hike to visit the famous Tiger's

Nest monastery, which is perched precariously on the edge of a mountainous clifftop overlooking the Paro Valley.

Bhutan prides itself on its exclusivity, its niche appeal and its commitment to sustainability.

The country charges short-term visitors a Sustainable Development Fee of US\$100 per person per day, a levy which will soon be doubled.

This fee generates revenue to cover healthcare and education programs for Bhutan's citizens and contributes to the country's reputation as one of the 'Happiest Places on Earth'.

Paro is also one of the most difficult places to visit, with the runway positioned deep in a valley in the Eastern Himalayas and between two towering mountains, with only 24 pilots trained to land there.

In fact, the airport is regularly featured among the most dangerous places in the world to land an aircraft. *ML*

Pictured above dressed in their fabulous cultural fashions is Craig Fyfe, Your Travel Expert; Kerry Dickson, Travelun; Harry Bevan, Renaissance Tours; Kristina Wilson, Inverted Atlas; Choki Dorji, Blue Poppy Tours & Treks; David Smyth, Forward Travel; Monica Godfrey, Legacy Journeys; Kansav Arslan, Tempotur; and Sandii Pink, TravelManagers.

Upchurch honoured

VIRTUOSO CEO and Chairman Matthew Upchurch has been inducted into the Altagama International Honorary Council, a collective which promotes Italy's top lifestyle, cultural and creative businesses and lifestyle.

Altagama represents 119 iconic and leading brands across seven industries - fashion, design, jewellery, food, hospitality, automotive and yacht building - to markets all over the world.

Explore Whitsunday

EXPLORE Group is offering a trade-only rate allowing industry partners to experience its new two-night Whitsundays cruise.

The discounted price of \$399pp is available on departures this winter - enquire on 0405 918 168.

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Travelex cash is king

FOREIGN cash brand Travelex is now dispensing British bank notes featuring the portrait of the current UK Monarch, King Charles.

Travellers seeking British cash for trips to the UK can now access the £5 and £50 notes at selected Travelex stores around Australia, with more stores expected to receive new notes later this week.

The new notes began circulating in the UK earlier this month, with notes featuring the late Queen Elizabeth II remaining legal tender but can be replaced if requested.

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In Pursuit of the Kimberley



SEABOURN'S new ultra-luxury ship, *Seabourn Pursuit*, sailed into Australian waters for the first time yesterday to begin her inaugural Kimberley season. The 132-suite ship set sail from

Darwin this morning on the first of six 10-day voyages between the NT capital and Broome, with departures until Aug.

Guests will witness the region's most iconic sights, with highlights including an exploration of King George Falls and a helicopter viewing of the Hunter River.

The voyages also feature Zodiac rides through rivers and sandstone gorges; a visit to Montgomery Reef; and an exploration of remote islands, including Freshwater Cove, Vansittart Bay, and Jar Island. *JM*

AmaLilia sets sail

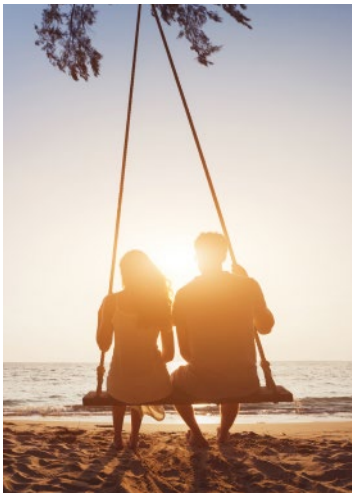
AMAWATERWAYS has debuted its newest ship, *AmaLilia*, which has set off from Luxor on the 11-night 'Secrets of Egypt & the Nile' voyage.

The 41-stateroom ship will sail seasonally from Sep through to Jun each year.

UA gets Kinect-ed

UNITED Airlines has announced the soon-to-launch Kinective Media, a new technology platform that will connect its customers to personalised, real-time advertising, content and offers from leading global brands.

The US carrier is already working with dozens of premium brands, including Norwegian Cruise Line, IHG Hotels & Resorts, and agency groups like Dentsu.



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TRAVEL 24
REVEALING THE NEXT 24 MONTHS IN TRAVEL

Bonza workers "in limbo"

THE Transport Workers' Union (TWU) has said the termination of 300 Bonza employees (*TD* yesterday) is a huge blow to the aviation industry, which stands to "lose hundreds more skilled, experienced staff after being burnt so many times in this industry".

Michael Kaine, TWU's National Secretary, stated, "this is incredibly difficult news for Bonza employees who have received no pay for more than two months after the airline's sudden collapse".

Adding insult to injury, the 323 Bonza workers - who have been stood down since 30 Apr - will "remain in limbo".

Although the union is ready to support workers with a Fair Entitlements Guarantee (FEG) process, Kaine said Bonza staff will need to wait until the carrier goes into liquidation before they can seek alternative full-time employment, otherwise they will lose their owed entitlements.

"We urgently need a Safe and Secure Skies Commission

to repair and rebuild a strong, sustainable aviation industry," Kaine argued.

MEANWHILE, Jetstar and Qantas have reaccommodated more than 25,000 Bonza passengers at no cost since the carrier ceased flying six weeks ago (*TD* 01 May).

Affected passengers can still claim a free flight with The Flying Kangaroo and its low-cost subsidiary until 30 Jun by contacting either airline's customer care team.

Additionally, Jetstar has invited Bonza employees to explore its job opportunities via a dedicated page on its careers site, while Virgin Australia has also committed to prioritising job opportunities for Bonza staff. *JM*

Too good to be true

PHILIPPINE Airlines is warning agents and travellers about a fake promotion currently circulating on social media.

The carrier said it is taking legal action to remove a fraudulent Facebook page, which is claiming to offer six flights with Philippine Airlines for just PHP168 (A\$4.33).

"PAL issues official announcements, including flight promotional ads, using the airline's official website and the official PAL Facebook page," the airline has reminded customers.

Basq in Byron Bay

BASQ House, a new 32-room boutique hotel, has opened in NSW's Byron Bay to offer guests a "home-away-from-home".

The property includes a library, speakeasy-style lounge room, a pool with cabanas, and more.

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Regent reimagined

AS PART of a huge two-year transformation, Regent Hong Kong has unveiled its new Signature Suites - a trio of luxury residential retreats, including the five-bedroom Presidential Suite.

Each penthouse offers sweeping views of Victoria Harbour and the city skyline, a private outdoor terrace and whirlpool, and around-the-clock personalised service.

Guests can also enjoy a window-front daybed, an oversized bath, daily breakfast, afternoon tea and evening cocktail experiences.

The redesigned suites evoke "understated sophistication", with warm cream tones and custom furnishings in natural oak with leather detailing.

LUXURY CRUISING SHOULD BE DEFINED

MID-TIER travel brands wrongly claiming to offer a luxury product has the power to hurt the entire luxury segment, says Silversea Asia Pacific MD, Adam Radwanski.

Speaking to **Travel Daily** aboard *Silver Ray* this week ahead of her formal welcome to the fleet, Radwanski claimed the incentive for brands to misappropriate the luxury mantle and leverage the current wave of high-end travel bookings is a myopic strategy.

"It's frustrating to see how travel brands these days overuse the word 'luxury' and it's because when you call your product 'luxury' it sells, but I believe it is a very short-sighted approach."

"The customer will ultimately understand the difference once they sample it, and there are quite a lot of operators below us who scream and shout that



they are luxury but they are not," Radwanski added.

One of the issues surrounding the definition, Silversea's local head explained, is that there is no "universal definition".

Radwanski suggested that the ordinary traveller won't be looking at quantifying the difference, concluding that is where the danger lies.

Echoing his sentiment was new

Global President for Silversea, Bert Hernandez, who told guests on *Silver Ray* that luxury can and must be defined.

"There is a school of thought that pretends that luxury travel is an undefinable, aspirational item that really confirms status more than anything else," he said.

"In our business however, I truly believe that the value is definable and we need to measure it, understand it, and how it relates to our brand."

Hernandez said that internally, Silversea sets the criteria around three separate items; destination delivery, culinary innovation, and consistent personalised service.

"It's not so much about conferring status, it's about signalling quality that is consistent across the world," Hernandez (pictured) added. **AB**

A Great NZ mystery

GREAT Journeys New Zealand is inviting guests to solve a murder mystery aboard its Scenic train, which departs from Christchurch on the evening of 17 Aug.

'Murder on the Tormore Express' offers "the ultimate dinner theatre and rail experience", where guests will be immersed in 1930s mystery and romance.

Tickets cost \$379pp, which includes the show, canapes, a drink, and dinner.

Seabourn's new zero-alcohol cocktail menu

SEABOURN has introduced Zero@Sea - a new collection of premium, non-alcoholic cocktails - across its fleet in all bars and lounges.

The inventive beverage menu was crafted in response to heightened demand among guests for alternative cocktails and non-alcoholic options.

Featuring ingredients like elderflower, citrus, and botanical spirits, the new selection offers a twist on traditional cocktails.



Guests sailing with the ultra-luxury cruise line can enjoy creations like 'Amalfi Spritz', 'Ginger Blossom', 'Ginny 'n Tonic', and 'Not So Cosmo', along with an upgraded selection of non-alcoholic wines and beers.

Janu's Dubai debut

AMAN Group has announced its second Dubai property, slated to open in 2027 on Jumeirah Beach.

In addition to 150 guest rooms, the luxury hotel will also feature fully serviced residents, a member's club, several dining and bar concepts, event spaces, and a wellness and fitness centre.

The announcement follows the launch of Janu's inaugural property in Tokyo earlier this year (**TD** 07 Mar 2023).

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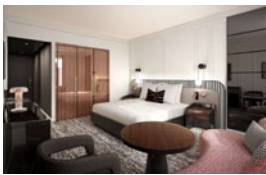
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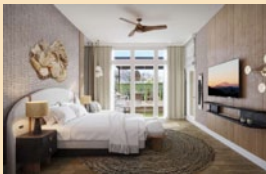
Under a \$5 million refurbishment project, **Club Wyndham Dunsborough** has revitalised all 82 apartments with new colour palettes inspired by the nearby Geopraphe Bay, including neutral whites and soft greys. Guests staying at the WA resort can relax with new furnishings and new flooring, including 100% wool carpets in the bedrooms, while the two-bedroom Grand apartments also now feature an ensuite attached to the main bedroom.



IHG Hotels & Resorts has announced the opening of **Holiday Inn Kyoto Gojo** by early 2025. The 183-key hotel will undergo a comprehensive refurbishment before rebranding, and will feature a lobby lounge and cafe bar, an upmarket restaurant, traditional Japanese daiyokujo baths, and a gym. The building's energy efficiency will also be improved during the renovation, with the installation of energy saving showers and new facilities.



Travellers heading to the Big Apple will soon enjoy refreshed accommodations at **Sofitel New York**, which has announced a significant makeover to coincide with its 60th anniversary this year. Due to be completed by Q3 2025, the transformation will encompass all 398 guestrooms, as well as the lobby, meeting spaces, guest elevators, and corridors.



Hyatt has announced it will reposition **Hyatt Regency Indian Wells Resort & Spa** in California under its Grand Hyatt portfolio later this year. The 531-room hotel is undergoing a US\$64 million renovation, with a redesign of its rooms and suites already completed. The resort is also set to unveil 39 new private villas in Nov, along with the debut of two new restaurant concepts, upgraded outdoor dining, and a new spa.



Situated in a picturesque village in Mexico, **Paraiso de la Bonita** will open in late 2024 under Marriott International's The Luxury Collection brand. Featuring an expansive spa, oversized oceanfront suites, and locally inspired dining experiences, the 100-key resort will be surrounded by 14 acres of natural landscape, offering views of the pristine waters of the Mexican Caribbean.

Cathay clears storage locker



NEARLY four years after arriving, Cathay Pacific's 76th and final plane has checked out of the Asia Pacific Aircraft Storage facility in Alice Springs and is now returning to Hong Kong.

The Airbus A330 (**pictured**) entered the desert storage facility on 28 Jul 2020 as the pandemic decimated travel demand, with many other airlines parking fleets in Central Australia at the time.

Now with aviation soaring once again, Cathay has restored its full fleet to operational service as it seeks to have 100% of its capacity back in the sky by early 2025.

While it has been sitting in the desert, more than 100 engineers on-site performed 16,000 checks to ensure all components stayed in pristine, operating condition.

More than 800,000 labour hours were spent on maintenance and processes to bring the aircraft back to airworthy status.

"Cathay Pacific continues to regrow its network and flights, and this was the final piece in getting all our aircraft back in the sky," said Cathay Pacific Regional General Manager, Southwest Pacific, Frosti Lau.

"It has been incredible to witness the team's dedication to achieve this." *ML*

Save big with HX

HURTIGRUTEN Expeditions (HX) is offering savings of up to \$4,000 per person on select 2025 and 2026 departures for its end of financial year sale.

Guests will also receive €150 (A\$244) worth of on board credits to spend as they please.

The offer can be applied to itineraries like 'Highlights of Antarctica', which departs in Oct 2025, and is priced from \$11,543pp down from \$14,564.

The voyage will explore the wonders of the frozen continent, with guests able to encounter the region's diverse wildlife, including seals and whales.

CLICK HERE to take advantage of the sale and make a booking before 30 Jun.



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