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## An Inspiring offer

**INSPIRING** Vacations is offering travel agents a \$100 gift card with every booking made before 31 May, such as the 19-day 'Ultimate African Safari', which is now offering savings of up to 20% for 2025 departures.

Head over to **page eight** for more information.

## VA/Air NZ codeshare win

**A RETURN** to a trans-Tasman codeshare partnership for Virgin Australia and Air New Zealand is a step closer, after the ACCC gave preliminary approval for the alliance to go ahead yesterday (**TD** breaking news).

The green light has been granted on condition that Air New Zealand specifies which fares VA may market and resupply those itineraries, with the arrangement not applying to any existing VA route to NZ, or any VA launches in competition with Air NZ.

If formally approved, the c'share will allow VA to sell unlimited seats on Air New Zealand routes between Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, so long as there is inventory.

The two carriers will also be able to jointly provide businesses with discounts and other marketing offers for VA-coded trans-Tasman services.

In making its decision, the competition watchdog said the

deal would open up a range of benefits for consumers.

"This proposed arrangement has the potential to increase ticketing choices for Australians travelling to New Zealand, and provide Velocity frequent flyer program benefits and international lounge access for eligible VA customers," ACCC Deputy Chair, Mick Keogh, said.

VA and Air NZ announced a plan to codeshare in Nov last year (**TD** 20 Nov 2023), almost six years after Air NZ dissolved its trans-Tasman alliance with VA.

VA operates services on routes between Q'town and Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. **AB**

### Today's issue of **TD**

**Travel Daily** today features seven pages of the latest news including **Business Events News**, a product profile from **APT**, plus a full page from **Inspiring Vacations**.

## Get to the outback

**THERE'S** still time for travellers to take advantage of APT's 2024 Outback Sale, which wraps up on 14 May.

See the **last page** of **TD** to discover the journeys on offer, which feature 4WD adventures, stays at wilderness lodges, guided walks, and much more.

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## Turnbull exits on a high

**TOURISM** leader Carolyn Turnbull has announced her departure from Tourism WA, with her last day to be 10 May (*TD* breaking news yesterday).

Turnbull, **pictured**, has led the state government agency as Managing Director for the past three years, during which time it achieved a record-breaking \$17.7 billion in visitor spend, surpassing pre-COVID levels by 31%.

Tourism WA Chair, Di Bain, emphasised Turnbull's key role in driving industry growth.

"Carolyn's leadership has been instrumental in launching numerous initiatives, programs, and securing substantial funding, all of which have contributed to the impressive growth of tourism in our state," she said.

Under her leadership, Tourism WA successfully launched its global 'Walking On A Dream' campaign, implemented the WA Visitor Economy Strategy 2033,



and secured a record number of events, including exclusives like Coldplay and Rugby Sevens.

She also oversaw the resumption and launch of direct flights between Perth and 19 international destinations.

Turnbull shared, "it was an incredible privilege to serve in the role", revealing she is preparing to "embark on a new journey".

The industry stalwart will begin a new leadership role in the tourism and hospitality industry on 01 Jun, with details to be kept under wraps until that time. *JM*

## Refunds in doubt

**IN A** further blow to passengers left stranded at airports after Bonza grounded flights, the administrator for the beleaguered airline has confirmed refunds are off the table - at least for now.

"Unfortunately, the administrators and/or the company are not in a position to process or issue refunds at this time," Hall Chadwick said.

"We understand how frustrating this is and we appreciate customers' patience at this time".

Bonza planes will remain on the tarmac until at least Fri at the earliest, leaving 183 flights with 33,000 passengers booked to fly over the next week in doubt.

While Federal Transport Minister, Catherine King, said it would be "unlikely" for Bonza to survive, sources have told the *AFR* that Hall Chadwick remains hopeful it can find a new financial backer for the airline.

An update from the agency is due later today.

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**Travel Daily ON LOCATION**

**NADI**

Today's issue of TD is coming from Fiji, reporting from the Fiji Tourism Exchange & South Pacific Tourism Exchange.

**BULA!** We've just landed in Nadi today to prepare ourselves for a jam-packed week of events - the Fiji Tourism Exchange and the South Pacific Tourism Exchange.

So for the next few days, we're taking it easy at a luxurious beachfront suite at the Intercontinental Hotel on the island of Viti Levu.

Think massages by the beach, relaxing at the infinity pool and soaking in the outdoor bathtub on our private balcony.

Tomorrow, we'll immerse ourselves in the local Fijian culture with the Sigatoka River Safari, where we'll visit villages by the water, meet a local chief and take part in a traditional kava ceremony.

## Envoyage in Santiago

EXCLUSIVE

THE inaugural Worldwide 2024 conference kicked off in Santiago last night with a vibrant welcome cocktail party that immersed delegates in Chilean culture with local cuisine and entertainment.

Marking the first major event for Envoyage, Flight Centre Travel Group's recently launched global independent brand (TD 27 Feb), this week's conference heralds an important milestone as advisors and travel partners from around the world gather under the exciting new marque.

Speaking to TD ahead of the event, FCTG Global Managing Director - Luxury & Independent, Danielle Galloway, enthused that the entire Envoyage family is "buzzing with anticipation" in Chile ahead of Worldwide 2024, "as our inaugural global conference and the premier event under our newly introduced global brand, Envoyage".

"Over the next few days, we'll unite our global community of members and valued partners to participate in a profoundly enlightening, stimulating, and motivational agenda," she said.

Galloway added she was very excited for the days ahead, stating she had been "overwhelming by the enthusiasm demonstrated by our members leading up to this event, which has been truly gratifying to see".

"Throughout the week, there will be an array of spectacular evening events and activities,

ensuring that everyone enjoys an exceptional experience at Worldwide 2024".

The exclusive two-and-a-half day event will continue tomorrow with keynote addresses, panel discussions, and workshops. AP

### Spring travel frenzy

SEP is shaping up to be a popular month for travel, with 28% of Aussies who are planning an overseas trip this year choosing to jet off during the first month of spring, according to the latest research from TTC Tour Brands.

The data showed that 77% of Australians aged over 18 intend to embark on international leisure travel in 2024, with 68% choosing to head to Europe, followed by Asia at 40%, New Zealand (25%) and the United States (19%).

According to the tour operator's research, the majority (54%) of those planning trips are looking to book within the next three months, with 14% considering a guided tour, while 20% are interested in cruises or all-inclusive resorts.

The study also revealed that many travellers are deal-focused, with 60% saying 'good value for money' is their primary motivator for booking, followed by discounts and promotions (52%).

TTC Tour Brands has also launched a 'September on Sale' campaign, offering up to 15% off Insight Vacations, Trafalgar & Costsaver itineraries until 30 May.

### Inspiring workplace

FOR THE second year in a row, Inspiring Vacations, which is currently transitioning to a four-day working week, has earned the title of Australia's #1 Best Place to Work in the 'Retail, Hospitality, Tourism & Entertainment' category at the AFR Awards.

### Airbnb unveils Icons

AIRBNB has launched Icons, a new category of experiences around the world hosted by famous names in music, film, television, art, sports and more.

The collection kicks off with 11 Icons, including the option to stay in Prince's Purple Rain house, rub shoulders with the likes of Kevin Hart and Doja Cat, and more.

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## Window Seat

THE age-old practice of tourists flagrantly disregarding their personal safety in pursuit of the perfect photo may never disappear, but officials in Hawaii are certainly going to try.

The state will spend US\$2.5 million removing the famous Haiku Stairs in Oahu, known as the 'Stairway to Heaven'.

Despite being closed to the public back in 1987 for safety reasons, thrillseekers continue to defy many 'No Trespassing' signs for admittedly indescribably beautiful views.

The stairs were originally built by the US Navy in 1942 when it constructed a top-secret radio outpost to communicate with passing navy ships.



In the 80s, the government of the time deemed the stairs too steep to be safely navigated and were then left abandoned.

While it has been mooted to operate the stairs as a paid tourist attraction, a lack of public facilities such as parking in a nearby residential area was deemed unsuitable, with sections of the stairs to now be removed by helicopter.

## VA/CTM help Yalari

VIRGIN Australia and Corporate Travel Management will jointly sponsor Yalari - a not-for-profit charity supporting Indigenous children in remote communities.

The two organisations will contribute \$50,000 to help Yalari boost its educational and leadership empowerment programs for Indigenous people.

Funds will go toward provision of student support officers and trips to leading boarding schools.

## Ayers Rock Resort's b'day surprise



VOYAGES marked the 40th birthday of its Ayers Rock Resort in style last night, hosting a special anniversary event at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia in Sydney.

CEO Matt Cameron-Smith (pictured) delivered an update on the property's evolution over the past four decades, which has included a bolstering of Indigenous employment from just 11 people to 250 staff members.

Making the gathering even more special was the news of two new guest experiences, which will both go live from 01 Aug.

Bookable from today, the new Sunrise Journeys offering will dazzle guests through the recreation of Indigenous artwork on a dark desert landscape using lasers and projection technology.

Accompanying music is scored by local musician Jeremy Whiskey, while the laser show has been inspired by Anangu culture and females artists Selina Kulitja, Denise Brady and Valerie Brumby.

The experience will operate daily, priced at \$125 for adults and \$75 for children, including breakfast, hot drinks and return air conditioned coach transfers.

Also debuting at the resort is the all-new Australian Native High Tea, featuring ingredients sourced from Central Australia with a modern twist.

The 1.5-hour high tea will be served daily at Sails in the Desert, with prices starting at \$75 for adults and \$45 for children. AB

## HLO on target in '24

HELLOWORLD Travel has reaffirmed its full-year guidance this morning, with the company's Mar quarter update indicating the business is on track for solid rise in bookings and revenue in 2024 (TD breaking news).

The update also showed that its retail networks in Australia and NZ are benefitting from a strong rebound in travel appetite, fuelled largely by airline capacity growth, cheaper airfares, and an increasing trust in travel advisors more broadly.

Drilling down on the numbers, Helloworld's Total Transaction Value for the Mar quarter was \$854.9 million, a significant lift on the Q3 FY23 result of \$596.3 million, while Underlying EBITDA grew modestly from \$14.2 million to \$14.6 million.

Helloworld also revealed that network numbers across its key agency businesses have stabilised over the last 12 months, with ongoing investment flagged to support its agent network through marketing, training, and systems development.

The business is also bullish on the cruise sector, suggesting that a rapid growth in operations in Australia and overseas will spur TTV growth this year.

Helloworld also confirmed it currently has strong liquidity and no external borrowings, with all recent acquisitions funded by internal sources.

Travel Daily ON LOCATION

ECUADOR

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of HX, which is this week hosting us on a cruise around the Galapagos Islands on board *Santa Cruz II*.

TODAY is our last day on the Ecuadorian mainland before we fly out to the Galapagos Islands tomorrow.

The day kicks off with a tour of Quito on one of its most colourful days of the year - Labor Day, during which the city's South American passion will be on full display with marches and demonstrations.

We are also being treated to lunch at El Crater - a restaurant located on the side of Pululagua, a dormant volcano in Quito's Andes.

## Cruiseabout opens

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group has opened the doors to its first new Cruiseabout retail store, five years after shuttering the brand.

The store (pictured below) can be found at Westfield Whitford City in Perth, with outlets in Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and the Gold Coast set to follow.

Cruiseabout General Manager, Brad Kennedy, said the brand was the only one of its kind with both an in-store and online presence.

"We're doing something that's unique here in Australia.

"Our national retail network of specialist cruise experts, local call centre and online marketplace will give customers something they've been missing out on."

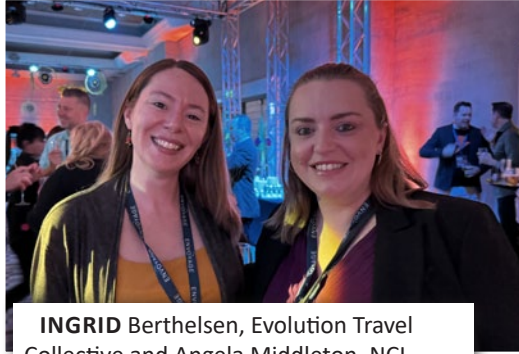


# Envoyage says hola to Santiago

WITH lively Chilean music, local performers, traditional dishes and exquisite cocktails, guests at Worldwide 2024 were immersed in Chilean culture at the event's welcome party last night.

Yesterday, travel advisors from Envoyage's global independent network, spanning five countries, arrived in Santiago ahead of the division's inaugural Worldwide 2024 conference.

The welcome function, aptly named 'Welcome to Chile', saw attendees don bright, bold colours as they gathered for the first time in a memorable evening to kick start the conference.



**INGRID** Berthelsen, Evolution Travel Collective and Angela Middleton, NCL.



**ENVOYAGE'S** leadership team are ready for Worldwide 2024 - Allie Sparr, Danielle Galloway, Astrid Richardson and Kelli McCosker.



**SAMANTHA** Langton, Explora Journeys and Vanessa Whitaker, Envoyage.



**WENDIE** Lee and Shaldine Ballabio, Envoyage.



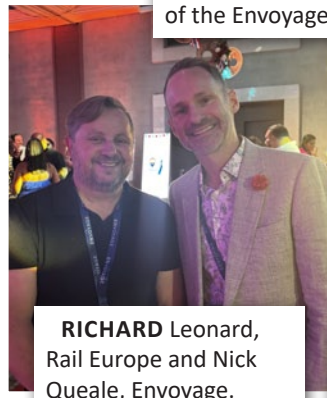
**SCOTT** Cleaver, TTC Tour Brands; Mitch Spencer, Globus Family of Brands; and Gia Acitelli, Globus Family of Brands.



**RACHAEL** Hardy, Shellharbour Travel; Fiona Batten, Envoyage; Melissa Goodwin, Travel Partners; and Lisa Zahra, Envoyage.



**SOME** of the Canadian contingent of the Envoyage team.



**RICHARD** Leonard, Rail Europe and Nick Queale, Envoyage.



**DISCOVERING** Chilean culture, one headdress at a time.



## NZ's new biz events strategy

**NEW** Zealand has launched a new national business strategy outlining a "focused vision" for the industry over the next 10 years.

Led by Business Events Industry Aotearoa (BEIA), the new roadmap aims to enhance the sector's positive impact on culture, society, the environment, and the economy through to 2035.

The comprehensive strategy, which can be read in full **HERE**, aligns with the wider goals of Tourism 2050, a vision set out by Tourism Industry Aotearoa in 2023.

BEIA Chair, Martin Snedden, said the plan, titled 'Piata Mai', is a first for NZ's business events sector.

"It means 'to shine bright', and symbolises the industry's readiness to excel domestically and globally, driven by its commitment to resilience and sustainability."

**MEANWHILE**, Te Pae Christchurch is celebrating two years of operation, in that time having hosted more than 200,000 attendees.

The centre has held 458 events, including 146 multi-day conferences - 29 of which were international - as well as 19 exhibitions, 157 meetings, 131 banquets, and five live performances over the past 24 months.

## BRISSY'S \$94M BIZ EVENT BOOST

**BRISBANE** is anticipating a huge economic boost from its 2024 business events line-up, which includes a host of key global health and science conferences.

The high-profile conferences are projected to pour more than \$94 million into the city, luring thousands of delegates from across Australia and the globe.

Brisbane Economic Development Agency (BEDA), the city's convention bureau, has secured lucrative events like the Health Services Research Conference and the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators (RACMA) 2024 National Conference.

The city's Lord Mayor, Adrian Schrinner, said, "Brisbane's reputation as a leading location to host events is continuing to grow across the globe".

"As our city continues to secure high-profile events, Brisbane



is refining its hotel, venue and lifestyle offering to offer an unparalleled delegate experience."

BEDA CEO Anthony Ryan added that Brisbane's recent slew of new international airline routes was powering a resurgence in international visitors to the city.

"As one of the largest hospital and healthcare clusters in the southern hemisphere, and home to more than 100 health and biotech facilities, Brisbane's world-leading health and life

sciences industry and expertise is driving interest from global events in this sector."

**MEANWHILE**, in other exciting news for Queensland's business events sector, Visit Sunshine Coast has unveiled a new brand identity to "encapsulate the very spirit of the sun-kissed region".

The brand revamp includes a refreshed website, logo and 'Sizzle Reel', a video showcasing the region's beauty, sustainability ethos, and range of venues. *JM*

## ICC Sydney inks

**ASM** Global has been awarded a 10-year contract extension to operate ICC Sydney, after delivering "extraordinary results" for the past decade.

The venue management company is on target to generate \$5 billion in economic benefit over the 25-year period of the Public Private Partnership at ICC Sydney, having already delivered \$3.9 billion in under seven years.

## Cliftons is BOSS

**CLIFTONS** Event Solutions has been recognised as one of Australia's best places to work for the second consecutive year.

The Sydney-based company scored fourth place in the *AFR* BOSS Best Places to Work for 'Retail, Hospitality, Tourism & Entertainment' category in 2024.

Cliftons' staff enjoy mental health and wellbeing programs, work-life balance, and flexible leave policies.

## BESydney portal

**EVENT** organisers can now access Business Events Sydney's (BESydney) new planning portal, which offers tools, resources and funding, including a marketing toolkit.

Designed to specifically benefit smaller events, the new online resource allows users to create custom supplier lists based on their event preferences.

Planners can also access the Sydney Meeting Fund - make a free account **HERE**.



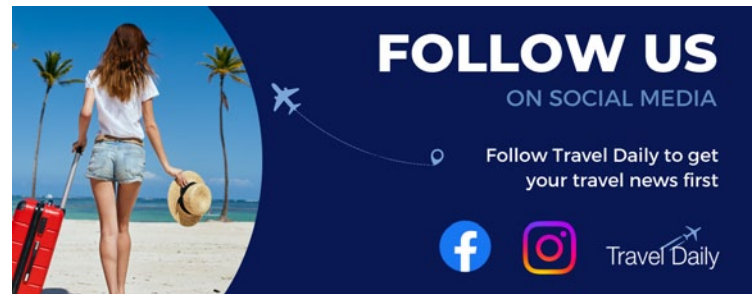
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## APPOINTMENTS

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[appointments@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:appointments@traveldaily.com.au)

**The Walshe Group** has appointed **Greg Atkins** as South African Airways Account Executive for the NSW and Queensland regions. Atkins brings a travel consultant perspective to the role, thanks to his agency background. He will draw on his extensive experience to manage bookings, sales updates, and more across the two states for South Africa's national carrier.

**Anita Salvatore**, the current COO North America for **Corporate Travel Management (CTM)**, will take on a new challenge as CEO North America, replacing Kevin O'Malley, who is stepping down at the end of Aug. O'Malley leaves after a 30-year career, paving the way for Salvatore's ascent. Her journey at CTM, which began in the role of SVP, General Manager in 2018, was followed by her promotion to EVP Customer Success two years later, and now her appointment as CEO is a testament to her dedication and success in the industry.

**David van Ooran** has succeeded acting Executive Director, Claire Wright, as the new Executive Director at **Perth Zoo**. The appointment follows the Cook Government's \$51 million investment to enhance the attraction's facilities, including a new cafe, playground, and function centre. Van Ooran arrives with an abundance of relevant experience, including tenures at WA Museum and Tourism WA.

**Explora Journeys** has announced **Christopher Austin** as its President of North America, based in Miami. Austin joined the luxury division of MSC Group as its Chief Sales Officer in 2020 after spending nearly three decades in the hospitality sector, including a three-year stint with Seabourn Cruise Line and an 18-year tenure at Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide.

**Richard Slarp** has become the new Executive Chef at **QT Sydney**. He will spearhead the hotel's food & beverage operations, drawing on more than 30 years of leadership and culinary experience. Slarp was most recently the Executive Chef at Sake Restaurant & Bar Manly, and before that, the Alpha Restaurant, a Greek dining venue in Sydney.

**Delta Air Lines** has announced the appointment of two new members to its Board of Directors - **Maria Black**, CEO and President of Automatic Data Processing, and **Willie Chiang**, Chairman and CEO of Plains All American Pipeline. The appointments bring a wealth of experience from the technology and energy sectors, enhancing the board's depth and diversity as the airline continues to strengthen its market position.

**Dean Hamilton**, Director for **Auckland Airport**, has temporarily reduced his duties with the New Zealand hub as a result of stepping into the role of Executive Chair at Ryman Healthcare Limited for a period of time, while that company recruits for a new Chief Executive Officer. Hamilton will remain available to the airport "where necessary".

## Hilton to debut in Townsville



**HILTON** has expanded its portfolio in North Queensland with the signing of Hilton Garden Inn Townsville, slated to open in 2026 alongside the Queensland Country Bank Stadium.

Located within walking distance of an array of shops, restaurants, and cafes, the 190-key property will feature a restaurant and bar, multiple meeting rooms, a fully equipped gymnasium, and a swimming pool.

The \$60 million property (render **pictured**), which will mark the first Hilton-branded hotel in Townsville, will be modular constructed in order to cut down on construction time and costs.

"The Hilton Garden Inn brand is experiencing swift expansion throughout Australasia, boasting three operational hotels and an additional six in the pipeline that will triple our presence over the next five years," said Tushar Raniga, Hilton's Director of Development, Australasia. *JM*

## Cooking up interest

**THE** Cook Islands have enjoyed a strong rise in Australian visitation, with new data from Webjet revealing a 48% increase in bookings for the next six months, compared to the same period in 2023.

The small South Pacific nation is also making solid inroads on social media, taking over TikTok travel bucket lists with #CookIslands attracting 10 million views over the past four months.

"Webjet data shows a growing interest in alternative destinations like the Cook Islands...[which] are on the radar as a next favourite island destination for Aussies," Webjet OTA CEO David Galt said.

Bali, a long-held favourite destination for Aussies, continues to have its moment in the sun, with bookings up 47% since last year, while overall bookings to Fiji have seen a 3% decrease.

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Journeys across the Kimberley feature stays at APT's exclusive network of Wilderness Lodges. With locations across Bell Gorge, the Bungle Bungle Ranges and the newly refurbished Mitchell Falls Lodge, guests will wake to the call of the Australian bush, and as the sun sets and the stars light up the night sky, they can retire to the campfire to share a story or two.

On APT's 15-day Kimberley Complete

journey, guests will explore the El Questro Wilderness Park. Here, they will be treated to a swim beneath a towering droplet waterfall at Emma Gorge and relax in the hot springs at Zebedee Springs. Overnight, guests will enjoy a stay amidst the untamed wilderness at Emma Gorge Resort.

An outback stay at Kings Canyon Resort on APT's 15-day Central Australian Discovery allows guests the opportunity to witness the enchanting Light-Towers installation, crafted by renowned British artist Bruce Munro. The following morning, they will take in the canyon's incredible sandstone walls and marvel at the canyon itself at the lookout on the Kings Canyon Rim Walk.

A highlight of APT's 14-day Essence of the Outback is the Archway Explorer tour, a guided discovery of Undara Volcanic National Park's mysterious lava tubes and caves. Guests then enjoy an authentic outback Queensland experience as they relax for the evening at Discovery Resorts Undara.

## APT 2024 OUTBACK SALE EXTENDED

APT's 2024 Outback Sale has been extended. Save thousands\* on selected APT Outback journeys departing in 2024. Also, on select Kimberley land journeys flights are included\*. Offers must end 14 May 2024. To discover the offers available, visit the APT website or contact the APT team today.  
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