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Travel Daily

First with the news

Thursday 14th Nov 2024

MTA Advisor Danielle Lawson



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TRAVEL professionals are invited to attend A Force For Good Hub's 2025 event in Sydney, with more than 20 inspiring leaders set to take the stage.

There will also be a networking after-party - find out more details on the **cover page**.

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FCTG flags retail growth

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) will aim to open 35 new stores in the next year as it seeks to take steps to restore its retail network to pre-pandemic levels.

Addressing shareholders at FCTG's Annual General Meeting this morning, CEO Graham 'Skroo' Turner said among the new shops will be as many as 18 Travel Money Oz branded outlets.

Turner said while the company was "generally happy" with the current size of the Flight Centre shop network, there were growth opportunities both in Australia and in the UK, via the resurgent Cruiseabout brand.

Across the existing network, Turner added the company was looking to bring on more staff in time for the peak selling season in the first half of 2025.

Further investments will see FCTG spend around \$100 million on other CapEx needs, with tech and systems likely to see major updates across the group.

Shareholders were provided with a preliminary trading update, with Turner stating FCTG was now aiming for a full-year profit before tax of between \$365 million and \$405 million.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily features eight pages of news including a cover wrap from **A Force for Good**, a product profile from **TBO**, our **Business Events News**, and a full page from **Infinity Holidays**.



If even the mid-point of this forecast was achieved, Turner said this would set a new company record, eclipsing the \$384.7 million recorded in FY18.

FCTG added momentum was building toward the target, with basket sizes increasing in its leisure shop network and enquiry levels remaining healthy. *ML*

ATAC the underdog

THE Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC) may feel it has plenty of work ahead to grow in a tough market dominated by larger players, but the group has some tricks up its sleeve for the year ahead.

To find out more about ATAC's future plan to expand and fight back against what it terms a "duopoly", read the latest feature in *travelBulletin* **HERE**.



Infinity's win & sip

AGENTS can win a dozen Californian fine wines when they sell Infinity Holidays' California packages and products during the campaign period.

Learn more about the ready-to-book packages on offer by heading to **page nine**.

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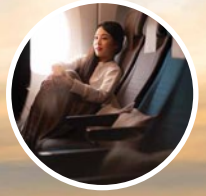
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Issue via [TravelTech](#)

Grow your business

DISCOVER how TBO.com, a leading global travel distribution platform, can enhance the overall booking experience and help travel businesses grow.

TBO.com offers access to travel products, including hotels, flights, tours and transfers - see **p10**.

1000Access goes live

ADVISORS in the 1000 Mile Travel Group (1000MTG) can now book hotel and car rental inventory as part of a major content expansion for the group's booking platform, 1000Access.

Flagged earlier this year as a future product update alongside its expansion to Australia (TD 10 May), the addition of hotels and car hire allows advisors to build larger itineraries within the Sabre Red LaunchPad-linked system.

Like its earlier flight functionality, advisors can compare rates, check availability and book in one system, with automation in place to manage client profiles, generate invoices and create full itineraries.

Nearly 40% of 1000MTG's North American agent network has been added to 1000Access, and has so far amassed commissions over US\$120,000.

1000MTG co-founder and CEO Nicola Veltman said the initial goal with 1000Access was clear and was being realised through time savings and higher revenues.

"Today, it has evolved into a game-changer that provides real-time access to a wide array of content plus advanced features like automatic ticketing, negotiated fares, and commission tracking," Veltman said.

1000MTG co-founder Ben Ross added the platform is designed to maximise productivity.

"While it's powered by Sabre Red LaunchPad, the product, content and back-end automation

we've built in ensures advisors get the most out of every workday," Ross added.

On top of booking functionality, 1000 Access also provides insights into business performance and identifies up-selling and cross-selling opportunities. *ML*

JB unpacks benefits

JOURNEY Beyond has revealed more details about its 2026 season of overnight and all-inclusive experiences, including guaranteed OST departures exclusively for trade partners, new rail packages, and further lodge upgrades at Sal Salis Ningaloo Reef.

Journey Beyond's Executive General Manager - Sales and Partnerships, Alicia Triggs, told TD that she is confident the company's partners will have options to "delight any client enquiring about a special Australian holiday."

Trade partners can download trade assets including social tiles, flyers and EDM headers via JB's Experience Hub **HERE**.



Albatross guarantee

ALBATROSS Tours has 100% guaranteed all spring, summer and autumn 2025 departures, as well as announcing more capacity for its France tours.

The operator said its three new France itineraries are especially popular, with limited spots left.

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Travelworks checks in to Oz

AUSTRALIA'S competitive travel industry mid- and back-office game has a new player, with the launch of Canadian travel tech brand Travelworks. Already a leader in North America, Travelworks Australia's expansion is being spearheaded in the local market by its local representative, Black Sheep Tourism, led by Trish Shepherd.

After three years of careful finessing and tailoring for the Australia and New Zealand market, Shepherd told *Travel Daily* Travelworks will set a new standard in travel technology.

"I was looking at how I can help the travel agents of Australia during COVID to tidy up their databases and be able to segment so that they can do



targeted marketing themselves," Shepherd said.

"I wanted them to control their own database, segment their own database, and run their own marketing, but couldn't on the systems that were available - it was either too difficult or they didn't pull the right data."

Travelworks is GDS-agnostic and has been designed to handle multiple currencies and can adapt to various business models such as a solo home-based agent or someone with a larger workforce.

The system can connect and integrate client file histories, bulk supplier payments, automated messages and has an integrated CRM with a central dashboard, all of which Shepherd said have been a hit with clients so far.

"Our commitment to innovation means we'll continue enhancing the platform to meet the evolving demands of the industry."

CLICK HERE to book a demo.

Shepherd is **pictured** centre flanked by Black Sheep Head of Training, Colleen Sommerin and Customer Service Manager, Bronwyn Labate. *ML*

LuxeWorld expands in Syd



HIGH-END travel agency and Travellers Choice member LuxeWorld has opened a second Sydney retail space in Rose Bay.

The new location employs a team of four experienced consultants, led by LuxeWorld Manager Emily Soutter, who also oversees the company's flagship store in St Ives Shopping Village on Sydney's Upper North Shore.

"Sydney's eastern suburbs and upper North Shore areas share similar demographics, so when the opportunity arose to secure a high-profile location, we seized it," Soutter said.

"The new store has already attracted significant attention from customers looking for an independent agency offering luxury travel products and outstanding customer service."

The Rose Bay store launch was celebrated earlier this month with an event at the Royal Motor Yacht Club in Point Piper, which attracted more than 75 guests,

including clients, local business leaders and the Mayor of Woollahra, Sarah Swan. *JM*

Pictured: The LuxeWorld team - Rafika Radjam, Kerry Andrews, Jade Hancock, Vach Karmolphachak, Glen Taylor, Bronagh Walsh, Souttar, Lionel Bonnafous and Angie Dumic.

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Cruise sails through record

CRUISE tourism made its highest-ever global economic impact last year, generating US\$168.6 billion in economic activity, according to a new report published by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA).

Last year surpassed 2019 as the benchmark year for cruise industry performance, the new *2023 Global Economic Impact Study* revealed, with 2023 up 9% on pre-pandemic volumes.

The sector's contribution is also outpacing global GDP, to which it contributed US\$85.6 billion, attendees at the recent CLIA Cruise Forward conference in Miami heard.

The latest figures reflect the rising popularity of cruise holidays globally, with 31.7 million passengers sailing last year, an increase of 7% from the 29.7 million who sailed in 2019.

"The cruise industry is an important contributor to the



global economy, generating billions of dollars in economic output and supporting millions of jobs," outgoing President & CEO Kelly Craighead said.

"The economic impact of the industry extends long after a cruise ends, as CLIA research shows that 60% of cruise passengers return to a destination they first visited on a cruise for a longer stay.

"As demand for cruising continues to grow, our member cruise lines are committed to preserving the integrity, cultural heritage and beauty of treasured destinations so they can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike," she added. *MS*

CATO lends weight but with conditions

THE Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) has lent its support to Qatar Airways' proposed minority purchase in Virgin Australia, so long as there are no reductions in the ports QR currently flies into Australia.

In a submission to the ACCC published yesterday, the peak industry body representing tour operators and wholesalers said it was broadly in favour of the equity purchase, stating it would place a downward pressure on airfares and add key capacity needed for the touring sector.

But CATO added it did not support 'hubbing' through SYD, MEL and BNE at the expense of direct flights to other cities.

The body is also against any constraints being placed on VA's ability to codeshare with other airlines to Europe, Africa or the ME, citing each market as being "vital" to its membership.



BUDAPEST

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of *Aviareps*.

THE old-world charm of Budapest does not disappoint, and today we're going to the Hungarian State Opera House to enjoy a mini concert.

It is a spectacular building, constructed in the late 19th century in a neo-Renaissance style, featuring beautiful paintings and sculptures from Hungarian artists.

Then we'll stop by the Gundel Palace, where we'll grab a bite to eat while listening to live music.

In the afternoon, we will observe traditional strudel making at the First Strudel House of Pest, before heading to the Light Art Museum.



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LTC breaks new ground with Complex

THE Luxury Travel Collection (LTC) believes it has “broken new ground” with the launch of an affiliate membership model, revealed to the market last week when Complex Travel Group became the first independently owned member (TD 08 Nov).

LTC has positioned the new affiliate membership model as a comprehensive luxury extension for travel businesses with existing host agencies or brand groups, but that importantly don’t require the complete suite of travel services offered within LTC.

General Manager Sales & Operations for LTC, Nikki Glading, said the contract to add Complex Travel Group - already a member of Link Travel - represented a win-win for the travel agency.

“The affiliation with LTC means that the business is also able to access LTC’s luxury product house to meet the requirements of its newly launched Onboard Luxury



brand,” Glading explained. “Affiliate membership is an excellent extension to an existing host membership for those businesses that already have strong, positive partnerships with host agencies, such as Complex and Link.

“Like our full membership, affiliate membership is also invitation-only, with LTC delighted to play a supporting role to hand-selected businesses by delivering the best luxury products for discerning clients, as well as offering a close knit and high calibre community and elevated events,” Glading added.

FCTG’s Travel Associates brand

was the first wholly-owned affiliate member of LTC.

“Travel Associates is the largest boutique luxury travel brand in Australia and already has its own well-known and highly effective marketing, campaign and product-to-market team, so did not require a full membership of the Luxury Travel Collection,” LTC General Manager of LTC Brand Anna Burgdorf said.

“Where LTC delivers very tangible additional benefit to Travel Associates is in our investment in an experienced luxury product and procurement team that has built an incredibly strong luxury house of products.”

Burgdorf added the goal now is to elevate luxury travel to new heights by pushing the boundaries of what currently exists in market and designing a ‘house’ that reacts to the unique needs of each member. AB

Pictured: Burgdorf and Glading.



Window Seat

TRAVELLERS in Rome may be disappointed when they visit the Trevi Foundation and find out that it is currently being drained for maintenance.

The iconic landmark draws a huge amount of tourists every day, many of whom come to toss a coin into the fountain for good luck.

For now, visitors who want to stick with the tradition will need to toss their coin over a plastic barrier and into a small makeshift pool in front of the attraction - which doesn’t exactly hold the same appeal.

“I think it is a very sweet gesture that people can still do that,” one visitor said, while another complained the substitute pool was “ugly” but would at least keep kids happy.

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Demand hits a peak

GLOBAL passenger demand for air travel hit an all-time high for Sep, with revenue kilometres up 7.1%, according to newly released data from IATA.

Total capacity failed to keep up, climbing 5.8% for the month and sending average load factors up one point to 83.6% year-on-year.

Broken down, international demand climbed 9.2% for the month, with capacity keeping pace and causing only a slight 0.1% load increase to 83.8%.

“We will soon face a capacity crunch in some regions, which threatens to curtail these economic and social benefits [so] governments will face a choice: lose out to more dynamic nations who value global connectivity, or forge a consensus for sustainable growth,” said IATA Director General, Willie Walsh.

Australia’s domestic aviation represents 0.8% of the global domestic market share.



New LE foodie tour

LUXURY Escapes has announced the launch of a new Signature Series tour - an eight-day foodie adventure in Malaysia, led by 2017 Masterchef winner Diana Chan.

Now available to book, the new itinerary enables guests to experience the rich and diverse flavours of Malaysian cuisine, with stops ranging from Michelin-starred restaurants to authentic street food hotspots.

The tour includes international return flights with Singapore Airlines, accommodation at some of the country’s top hotels, and an optional four-night extension in Langkawi.

Spots are limited, with prices starting from \$6,499 per person - more details [HERE](#).

Agents have a ball in Budapest



AVIAREPS and Visit Hungary are currently hosting a famil in Budapest for several travel industry professionals.

To kick off their first full day, the group departed from their accommodation at the Kimpton Hotel to enjoy a sumptuous breakfast at the famous New York Cafe, also fondly known as “the most beautiful cafe in the world”.

Located within the Anantara New York Palace Budapest Hotel, the iconic cafe was built in the 19th century, when it was frequented by prominent artists and literary figures.

After taking plenty of photos of the cafe’s opulent surroundings, the group were given a tour of the magnificent hotel.

Then, it was off to visit the Liget Project, a major urban cultural development featuring playgrounds, several museums, gardens and the House of Music.

Next on the itinerary was a hotel visit to Verno House, before heading to Aranybastyá, otherwise known as the Gold Bastion, which was built in 1872 and is situated in the Royal Castle district.

Here, the group sipped prosecco while enjoying views of the city, before indulging in a three-course lunch.

The afternoon featured a visit to the spectacular Matthias Church, located in the Castle district of Buda, which is a UNESCO World

Heritage site.

The group was then given a tour of the nearby Hilton Budapest, where they admired impressive night-time views of the Fisherman’s Bastion, the Parliament Building and the Danube River. *JHM*

Pictured: Back row - Ana Jarak, Scenic Luxury Cruises and Tours; Amanda Zirgulis, Luxury Escapes; Michael Zhang, Webjet; Britt Berning, Sun Island Tours; Nathan Walker, APT Travel Group; Jo-Anne Hui-Miller, **Travel Daily**; & Wilson Balachandra, Ormina Tours.

Front row - Priscilla Aster, Bunnik Tours; Emilie Groleau, Aviareps; Zsuzsanna Kovacs, Visit Hungary; and Adelle Clements, G Adventures.

ANA NDC coming

ALL Nippon Airways (ANA) has signed a New Distribution Capability (NDC) content and servicing agreement with global tech company, Travelport.

The Japanese carrier’s NDC content is expected to become available on the Travelport+ platform around mid-2025.

The collaboration means agencies using Travelport+ will soon be able to access relevant, personalised, and enriched multi-source content from ANA, allowing them to pass on best offers and fares to clients.

Coming to America

BRAND USA has announced a new famil opportunity for agents in Australia and New Zealand, in partnership with the Arizona Office of Tourism, Delta Air Lines, Infinity Holidays, Sports Where I Am and Alamo Rent A Car.

From 28 Feb to 08 Mar, eight lucky agents will get to attend sporting events in Las Vegas and Phoenix, as well as explore a section of the iconic Route 66 in Nevada and Arizona.

To win a spot on the ‘Brand USA Sports Odyssey Famil’, agents will need to ensure they are a silver status holder or higher with the USA Discovery Program before 15 Jan 2025.

For agents who have already achieved silver status, there are extra chances to win - find out more [HERE](#).

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GPO MARRIOTT SET TO DELIVER

MEETING planners can now celebrate Adelaide's colonial-era General Post Office as a new and unique event space located at the new Adelaide Marriott hotel.

The GPO features as part of the newly-opened hotel (**TD** 22 Aug) - Adelaide's first Marriott-branded property - with four adaptable event spaces created, each showcasing the historic building's rich history and catering to between 20 and 250 people.

At the centre of the available venues will be the Sir Charles Todd Ballroom, a pillarless space with four-metre high ceilings named after the driving force behind the building of Adelaide's Overland Telegraph Line.

The ballroom can cater for up to 250 people across theatre and cocktail format and is backed by a 220-inch LED wall.

The room can also be divided into two with no sound carryover



thanks to a vertical absorbing partitioning system allowing for sessions to be held concurrently.

Other venues within the 285-room hotel include the Archive Room, which can host 80 people seated and features heritage arch-framed windows and overlooks King William Street.

Smaller venues suited

to corporate meetings or presentations include The Light Room, named after Colonial William Light, who designed Adelaide's park-based city layout.

Private dinners for up to 20 people can also be hosted in the Drawing Room inside the heritage section, with catering provided by the hotel's main restaurant. *ML*

AIME revealed

THE Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME) has unveiled its 2025 Knowledge Program agenda (**TD** 17 Oct).

Taking place in Melbourne on 10 Feb, the program is themed 'We Matter!', and will focus on the global business events industry as a powerful driver of economic growth and innovation.

Key topics range from the importance of emerging talent in shaping the future of the industry and the impact of consumer experience on event outcomes, to maximising AI-Human synergy and safeguarding creativity in the digital era.

Attendees can choose from 20 breakout presentations across two 60-minute sessions, which aim to develop skills in four key categories, including upskilling, workplace management, industry matters, and self-leadership.

These breakout sessions will be hosted by more than 30 leading industry figures, including Melissa Brown, CEO Australian Business Events Association, and Sheila Vijayarasa, The Brave Leader.

Beforehand, two keynote speakers, Gus Balbontin and Dr Kristy Goodwin, will open the day - view the full program **HERE**.

FICP unlocks SITE incentive resources

THE Financial and Insurance Conference Professionals (FICP) has joined forces with the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE) to offer members access to education and networking opportunities relating to incentive travel.

SITE specialises in helping meeting planners design and deliver world-class incentive programs and rewards.

The offer is open to eligible

paid FICP members employed as meeting or event planners by an insurance or financial services firm.

Access to SITE membership also opens access to a global calendar of networking events.

SITE Chief Executive Annette Gregg said she was thrilled to partner with FICP and support corporate planners to plan and execute transformative travel experiences for their businesses.

Barbican imagine

LONDON cultural and conference venue, The Barbican, will showcase a series of innovations in use at the World Meetings and Events Industry Expo in Barcelona later this month.

The venue will demonstrate its new strategy to repurpose previously unused or under-used spaces, and how it has led to new clients and a 13% increase in attendees.



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Jerome King has taken on the role of Operations Coordinator at **Scenic Cruises**. No stranger to the travel industry, King's previous experience includes Head of Flights at Pelikin, Product Supply Manager at STA Travel, Supply Analyst at Australian Pacific Touring, Contracts Manager at Globus family of brands, and Product Manager - Airline Supply at Scenic Tours. King is based in NSW.

Zulal Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som in Qatar has welcomed **Ammar Samad** as its new General Manager. The seasoned hospitality professional has more than 20 years' experience under his belt, including overseeing the opening and management of multiple properties of some of the most well-known hotel groups in Doha. He also brings expertise in managing spa and recreation facilities.

COMO Hotels and Resorts has appointed **Peter Nilsson** as Managing Director for the Maldives, where he will oversee COMO Cocoa Island and COMO Maalifushi. In his new role, Nilsson will draw on over three decades of luxury hospitality experience, with a track record of managing high-end hotels and resorts across Asia, Indian Ocean and the Pacific with notable brands such as Ritz-Carlton, Soneva, Six Senses, Conrad and Anantara. He most recently served as CEO at Banwa Private Island, an exclusive estate in Palawan, Philippines.

Robert Clarke has been named as the new General Manager of **Grand Pacific Hotel**, a five-star luxury destination in Suva, Fiji. Clarke brings over two decades of luxury hospitality experience to his new role, having managed prestigious properties across Asia-Pacific and the Middle East. He is tasked with overseeing all aspects of the hotel's operations and elevating service standards to meet the expectations of discerning travellers. He will also help drive a planned refurbishment of the property, set to begin in early 2025.

Amid its rapid global expansion, **Minor Hotels** has appointed industry veteran **Omar Romero** as its Chief Development and Luxury Officer. In the newly created position, Romero will drive the global development strategy of Minor Hotels' luxury brands, identifying new business opportunities, overseeing the planning and execution of projects, and managing relationships with key stakeholders. Based in Bangkok, Romero will report to Dillip Rajakarier, CEO of Minor Hotels and Group CEO of Minor International.

Tourism Central Australia (TCA) has farewelled **Steve Jarratt**, Membership and Marketing Manager, who is departing after seven years with the peak regional tourism authority. The company's CEO, Danial Rochford, said Jarratt has gone above and beyond for its members, and has had a significant impact on the region and sector. During his time at TCA, Jarratt mentored many staff who were starting out in their careers. His replacement is yet to be announced.

The Langham coming to KL



LANGHAM Hotel Group (LHG) has announced it will open a new hotel in Kuala Lumpur in 2027 (render pictured), in collaboration with Artisan Hospitality, a joint venture led by a subsidiary of Singapore's Oxley Holdings.

The Langham, Kuala Lumpur will form part of the Oxley Towers KLCC complex, a premium property development situated in the Golden Triangle neighbourhood of the Malaysian capital's CBD.

Occupying the upper half of a new structure that boasts cityscape views, the hotel will house 198 guestrooms and suites, as well as a pool, destination bar, Cantonese restaurant, and eatery.

There will also be health and wellness offerings, including a fitness centre, and event spaces.

"We look forward to bringing our flagship brand to Kuala Lumpur, a gateway city in a thriving part of the world that is also home to a notably robust travel market," said LHG Chief Executive, Bob van den Oord.

The project marks the second

Southeast Asia hotel to be announced by LHG this year, following recently unveiled plans for The Langham, Customs House, Bangkok (*TD* 04 Sep). *JM*

Eurostar censured

EUROPE'S Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) has taken aim at rail operator Eurostar for grossly exaggerating the availability of £39 (A\$76) seats on sale in a social media promotion.

In response to complaints from travellers, the ASA said Eurostar pricing data showed only 4.2% of tickets sold between London and Brussels and 1.6% of those between London and Amsterdam during the promotion were actually available at £39.

The ASA said it is the second time this year the company has been found to be engaging in misleading advertising practices.

"Eurostar must ensure that a significant proportion of fares at the advertised price are available for future campaigns," the ASA said in a statement.

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3 nights at The Magic Castle Hotel, Hollywood and a private "The Original Hollywood Sign Hike Walking Tour."

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tbo.com
TRAVEL SIMPLIFIED

ONE OF THE LARGEST TRAVEL
DISTRIBUTION PLATFORMS
IN THE WORLD



1 million+
Hotels

159,000+
Travel Agents

100+
Countries Globally

Travel Daily
PRODUCT PROFILE



Grow your business with TBO

TBO.com is a leading global travel distribution platform with the aim of enhancing the overall travel booking experience for its partners.

It establishes a bridge between travel suppliers and distributors, empowering both to deliver their services in the best way possible.

TBO.com offers access to a comprehensive range of travel products, including hotels, flights, tours, and transfers.

By leveraging cutting-edge technology and a user-friendly

interface, TBO streamlines travel booking and management processes.

TBO.com serves over 159,000 travel partners globally, offering competitive pricing, real-time availability, and a vast selection of accommodations and services in more than 100 countries.

TBO's booking platform provides advanced tools such as dynamic packaging, white-label solutions, and real-time reporting, enabling travel partners to increase their profits, enhance customer

experiences, and plan itineraries with confidence.

The company places strong emphasis on delivering unparalleled customer service, with a dedicated support team available 24/7.

**START BOOKING
&
WIN REWARDS!**

Register Now

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