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## Let's go with Collette

**TRAVELLERS** can enjoy big savings on Collette tours around the world, thanks to the brand's Black Friday sale.

Agents can also download Collette's promotional toolkit to showcase the sale to their clients - find out more on **page seven**.

## Apollo looking to grow TTC

**EXCLUSIVE**

**THE** Travel Corporation (TTC) may be combined with other similar businesses under the future strategy of its new equity owner, Apollo Global Management (**TD** 17 Jul).

The possibility was revealed by TTC's new Chair Carl Leaver (**TD** 31 Oct), who told **TD** about Apollo's plan to significantly invest in its new acquisition.

"[Apollo] is very interested to explore other businesses they can buy and put together with TTC, so they're quite acquisitive in that sense," he explained.

"Their financial backing gives us the ability to invest in a lot the team have long wanted to invest in: better systems, heavier marketing, more investment behind the brands.

"I hope this will be more of the same, but better - it certainly won't look and feel hugely different any time soon."

When asked what opportunities Apollo is looking at for TTC, Leaver said there is a wide range of possibilities in the sector.

"We're obviously predominantly in land touring and river cruising, so those sectors are obviously of great interest to us from an acquisition point of view.

"Then there's FIT, and we obviously keep an eye on that space as well.

"It's a very fragmented industry, there's a lot of founder-operated businesses that amazing entrepreneurs have built to a size and are now looking for an exit...I think it's a great opportunity to consolidate the market, to create a scale player." *MS*

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

**Travel Daily** today features six pages of the latest travel industry news plus a full page from **Collette**.

## Web Travel halted

**WEB** Travel Group (formerly WebBeds) entered into a trading halt this morning, pending a further announcement.

Webjet opted to split up its consumer and B2B arms (**TD** 17 Sep) in a bid to capitalise on global growth opportunities.

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# Travel Daily

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**Japan Kyushu Island Express**

## Trade is our "core focus"

**EXCLUSIVE**

**INSPIRING** Vacations has highlighted its commitment to the travel trade with 10 lucky travel agents this week exploring Japan on the brand's second-ever familiarisation trip.

Speaking to **TD** ahead of the famil, Inspiring Vacations CEO and co-founder Paul Ryan shared "as we expand our trade presence, strengthening partnerships with agents remains a core focus".

"This famil is a unique opportunity to connect directly with our top performers and showcase first-hand what makes our tours extraordinary."

The advisors were selected to take part in the exclusive trade-only departure of the brand's top-selling 'Best of Japan' itinerary based on sales performance and as winners of the brand's incentive competition earlier this year (**TD** 02 Aug).

"We're thrilled to work closely

with our top-selling agents and provide them with the opportunity to explore one of our most beloved destinations, Japan," Ryan added.

The group will this week explore iconic destinations including Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto.

Inspiring Vacation's first trade trip took place in Sri Lanka earlier this year (**TD** 23 May).

While both the Sri Lanka and Japan familis have been well received by the trade, Ryan also explained that Inspiring Vacation's "commitment to supporting agents goes beyond incentives".

"Offering competitive commission and dedicated trade support team, we're building partnerships that empower agents with the knowledge and experiences they need to confidently recommend Inspiring Vacations tours to their clients."

To register as an agent with Inspiring Vacations, click **HERE**. **AP**

## Beachcomber buy

**VISION** Hotels has acquired Fiji's Beachcomber Island Resort in the Mamanuca Island group.

Under its new ownership, Vision will spend \$10 million on an extensive renovation of the budget-friendly resort, which is aimed at the youth and backpacker market and offers dorm-style accommodation.

The work intends to elevate the resort's standard to four star, with 40 new rooms to be added, taking capacity to 90 rooms, while existing rooms and common areas will also be renovated.

Located just off the mainland near Lautoka, Beachcomber Island Resort is also well known as a popular day tour destination and a spot for events, watersports and weddings.



**Travel Daily**  
ON LOCATION



**KYOTO**

Today's issue of **TD** is coming to you courtesy of Inspiring Vacations, which is hosting us in Japan alongside valued trade partners.

**OUR** week with Inspiring Vacations has continued over the weekend with a visit to Nara, famous for its historic temples and free-roaming deer, before making our way to Osaka and enjoying a tour of the Dotonbori area.

Today we will make our way to Kyoto where we will stand among the towering bamboo of Arashiyama Grove, visit the serene Kinkakuji with its floors of gold, and stroll through the authentic Gion district.

After an immersive day, the group will return to Osaka.

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## A dalliance in Dallas

EXPEDIA TAAP, Fiji Airways and Marriott International have teamed up to offer agents the chance to win a trip to the US.

The top five agents with the highest US booking value using Expedia TAAP will score themselves return flights for two with Fiji Airways on the inaugural non-stop Nadi to Dallas Fort Worth flight, departing 10 Dec.

The lucky winners will enjoy a four-night round trip to Dallas for two people, including accommodation at the Sheraton Dallas Hotel by the Galleria, giving them a chance to pick up some last-minute gifts at the Galleria Dallas Shopping Mall and see America's largest indoor Christmas tree - log into [expediataap.com.au](http://expediataap.com.au) for T&Cs.

## Powerhouse of the West

### EXCLUSIVE

WESTERN Sydney has the potential to become a standalone tourism powerhouse independent of established attractions around Sydney Harbour, if the airport is properly leveraged, Trilogy Hotels CEO, Scott Boyes, believes.

With up to 10 million people expected to be "dropped" each year into the region from the opening of Western Sydney Int'l Airport, Boyes said there are still a lot of missing pieces of the emerging tourism puzzle.

"There's almost this greenfield site that you could create a world-class tourism precinct that covers the whole of Western Sydney, and then what that does for communities, for jobs, and for the broader economic impact of Western Sydney is huge," he said.

As construction has progressed at the airport, major global and regional hotel brands such as InterContinental, Hilton, Courtyard by Marriott, QT, Four Points by Sheraton, Pullman and more have either opened in the region or started new hotel developments.



However, Boyes said in order for visitors to make Western Sydney the base for their whole trip and not venture into the CBD, infrastructure must be properly planned and mapped.

"It'll be a case of being able to go to a convention centre in Blacktown, a stadium event in Parramatta, an attraction in Penrith or a convention centre in Liverpool - infrastructure needs to be mapped so we don't have all the same replicated 15 times.

"Western Sydney is an interwoven piece of different districts and different areas that add different strengths and add a different piece of the story."

"It's about the opportunity that some of these projects provide, and if we don't take advantage of it, it'll be an opportunity lost." ML

More from TD's chat with Scott Boyes in [travelBulletin](#) [HERE](#).

## Air Rarotonga GSA

COOK Islands carrier Air Rarotonga has announced the appointment of AirlinePros International as its GSA in Australia and New Zealand.

The partnership aims to boost Air Rarotonga's sales, marketing, and customer service operations, enabling all agents in Australia and NZ to access Air Rarotonga's fares and schedules through more widely available channels.

Ewan Smith, Founding Partner and Managing Director of Air Rarotonga, said the appointment will "greatly enhance our reach and ease of booking for travellers in these key markets".

The agency support team can be contacted via [airrarotonga.au@airlinepros.net](mailto:airrarotonga.au@airlinepros.net) and [airrarotonga.nz@airlinepros.net](mailto:airrarotonga.nz@airlinepros.net).

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## Sep sets new milestone

SEP 2024 marked Australia's most active month of the calendar year for total overseas departures, with 1.8 million heading overseas.

The result marked a 13% jump in departures compared to the same month in 2023, which saw

less than 1.6m depart local shores.

The total departure count included 1.17 million short-term resident departures, a 10% spike on the prior year.

Inbound arrivals also performed strongly, with more than 630,000 short-term visitors - up 7.9% - which while larger than 2023 was still more than 60,000 or 9.2% short of the pre-pandemic level.

New Zealand accounted for nearly one in every five arrivals or 19.2% of the total contingent, with China (72,570) and the UK (41,980) completing the podium.

While NSW still reined supreme as Australia's primary inbound destination for arrivals, Western Australia saw a big 18.9% year-on-year jump with more than 67,000 heading west.

Tasmania, Northern Territory and the ACT also posted impressive numbers, with the capital in particular seeing a 20.2% spike in arrivals. ML

## Celestyal simplified

CELESTYAL Cruises is set to introduce a new, simplified fare structure, 'Celestyal One', which will replace its 'Experience' and 'Experience Plus' packages.

The cruise line is also set to introduce a prepaid food and beverage digital wallet, 'CelestyalPay', in what will be the biggest change to Celestyal's sales structure in its history.

The changes will take effect from next month, with Celestyal One to include the cruise fare, complimentary wi-fi, filter coffee, tea, water, and juice.

ALMOST 200 Aussie agents are now Tauck-certified, after the tour operator hosted its biggest-ever training initiative with the trade Down Under.

The series saw 195 advisors attend Tauck training academies in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne, gaining their certifications after five hours of in-depth learning.

"At Tauck, we believe that our travel advisors are the heart and soul of our business," said David Clark, MD Australia, who led the initiative during the brand's week-long sales blitz across the Australian travel industry.

Celebrating its 100th year of operation in 2025, Tauck also introduced a range of new itineraries during its trade mission Down Under, which saw its VP

Global Sales and Reservations, Steve Spivak, visit, alongside 14 key representatives from the United States and Canada.

Debuting in 2026 and now on sale is the new 11-day 'Bordeaux, Paris and The Seine' tour which includes an eight-day river cruise, running from May to Oct 2026.

"Some of the key highlights of this itinerary are the after-hours at The Louvre [and] the private Monet experience at Giverny," Spivak said.

"And going to Giverny when it is just you [makes you] look at it in such a different way than when it's 10,000 people with selfie-sticks trying to get onto that little Japanese bridge over the lily pond.

**Pictured:** Tauck Academy Sydney with Megan Catterall from LUXE by Itravel. JM

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## Window Seat

FOR those of us who have ever wondered what it would have been like to be a gladiator in Ancient Rome, wonder no more - Airbnb has made it possible to step back 2,000 years in time and put your battle skills to the test.

Under a new multi-million dollar sponsorship deal, up to 32 travellers will be chosen through a lottery system to step inside the historic arena in May to "face off against your fellow warriors".

Despite funding the renewal of an education program on the history of the ancient amphitheatre, the deal has drawn criticism, especially from Rome's Councillor for Culture, Massimiliano Smeriglio, who warned it encourages the "commodification" of culture.

"The news of the gladiatorial show inside the Colosseum leaves us perplexed," Smeriglio declared on social media.

However, the chief of the Colosseum Archaeological Park, Alfonsina Russo, defended the plan.

"The goal of the collaboration is to enhance the historical and cultural heritage of the Flavian Amphitheatre through immersive activities that fully respect the monument."

## Agents are turning Japanese



A TRADE famil has just returned from Japan, showcasing the country's unique opportunities for the cruise market.

The group was hosted by Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO), spotlighting Kyushu and rural Japan for Australian travel professionals, and providing a first-hand experience of the country's diverse travel offerings.

The journey explored destinations like Fukuoka, Beppu, Takachiho Gorge, and Kumamoto.

The four-night tour showcased Kyushu's coastal and scenic cruise opportunities, and was structured to align with specific travel themes and regions, ensuring the group experienced Japan's

attractions and local experiences.

"We showcased the beauty, easy accessibility and uniqueness of areas in Kyushu still relatively unknown by the Australian market," JNTO Business Development & Senior Assistant Marketing Manager Harriett Bougher said.

"Our goal of this famil is that, with first-hand insight and experience, our carefully selected participants will be able to craft tour products that will encourage more Australians to travel to Kyushu pre- and post-cruise." MS

**Pictured** are Alison Finch, My Cruises; Adam Burke, Scenic Tours; John Braid, eCruising; and Harriett Bougher, JNTO.

## Sinclair joins Globus

GLOBAL family of brands (GFOB) has appointed Darren Sinclair as Business Development Manager NSW South & ACT effective immediately.

Sinclair joins from Colette, where he was also a BDM.

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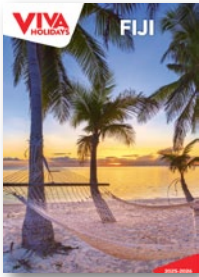
### Collette - Small Group Explorations 2025/26

Since launching Explorations in 2008, demand for small group travel has grown significantly. Meeting that demand means more than just offering tours with fewer travellers; it's about creating experience-driven journeys that provide access, education, and meaningful connections. The 2025/26 Explorations brochure reveals how Collette's unique approach to small group travel brings your clients closer to culture. With over 50 thoughtfully designed tours across the globe, this edition is filled with inspiring journeys for culturally curious travellers who want to experience the world in a more immersive way. Your clients can save up to 25% on all of Collette's new Explorations tours during its Black Friday sale when booked by 04 Dec.



### Bench Africa - Small Group Tours & Safaris 2025

Embark on a small group, overland safari with Bench Africa, in partnership with Nomad Africa. The 2025 new-look brochure collaboration offers tours spanning Southern and East Africa, and features a diverse range of experiences, inclusive activities, and a choice of either camping or accommodated options to suit all budgets. Nomad's purpose-built vehicles and seasoned local crew ensure guest safety and comfort throughout the journey. Adventure beyond tourist hot spots to discover iconic landmarks and hidden gems, all while immersing in local cultures.



### Viva Holidays - Fiji 2025-2026

Viva Holidays has released its new 2025/26 Fiji brochure, with something for everyone - think sun-drenched beaches, crystal clear waters, and warm Fijian hospitality. The guide showcases a wide range of accommodation and activities to get the most out of your clients' time in Fiji, as well as plenty of ways to get around the mainland and out to the islands, like fast boats, helicopters and sea planes - or do it on your own and hire a car. And if adventure is what you're looking for, Viva Holidays has recently added e-bike and quad bike tours to its range.

## Marriott Bonvoy's grand slam



**MARRIOTT** Bonvoy has extended its strategic partnership with Tennis Australia, returning as the official hotel partner for the Australian Open.

Over the summer, Marriott Bonvoy will host some of the biggest names in tennis, VIPs and tournament officials across its portfolio of hotels including The Westin, The Ritz-Carlton, W Hotels, Sheraton, Marriott, and The Tasman, a Luxury Collection Hotel in Hobart.

The exclusive partnership will also offer Marriott Bonvoy members access to over 55 unique Marriott Bonvoy Moments packages, which include exclusive access to money-can't-buy events and experiences.

These include premium viewing tickets across marquee matches including both Women's and Men's finals and access to Marriott Bonvoy's private hospitality suite, plus chances to experience exclusive tennis clinics and events with tennis

legends, along with trophy photo opportunities.

Over the last three years, the partnership has generated strong results for Marriott International, driving more brand engagement, higher occupancy, and significant revenue growth across its Melbourne portfolio.

"The power of the Tennis Australia partnership in 2024 saw our member penetration rising from approximately 50% to over 70% during the tournament," said Jason Nuell, Area VP - Australia, New Zealand & Pacific of Marriott International.

"Over 14 million Marriott Bonvoy points were burnt during the tournament, highlighting the interest from our global and local members in the experiences we curate as part of the partnership programming," he added. *JM*

**Pictured:** Craig Tiley, CEO Tennis Australia; Rajeev Menon, President - Asia Pacific (excl. China) at Marriott International; and Nuell.

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