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## ATIA to retire the ATAS brand

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) will retire the ATAS brand in exchange for a more unified brand approach (*TD* breaking news).

Revealed this morning at the inaugural Beyond Borders Travel Summit, the ATAS branding will be updated to ATIA Accredited, a move that ATIA CEO Dean Long said would take the gold standard of travel accreditation toward a single, recognisable identify.

“The single brand transition... is more than just a rebranding, it is about creating a seamless and trusted travel ecosystem that benefits the entire travel community,” Long said.

“This move will allow us to engage more effectively with consumers and build long-term trust, ensuring that our members remain competitive in a rapidly evolving market,” he added.

Speaking with *Travel Daily*, Long explained that 10 years ago, it



made sense to have two brands, but it is no longer relevant in today’s market, with all of the media exposure and advocacy that the industry body is doing under the ATIA brand.

“To not have the members benefit from having that investment that we are making every week in above-the-line commentary in the media...it really didn’t make much sense to continue a two-brand strategy.”

Long stressed that the brand pivot in no way means ATIA is retiring the ATAS program, which will “continue to be evolved”.

“The code of conduct will still be in play, we will still be rejecting 25% that want to join, we will still be maintaining those standards,”

Long explained.

The ATAS announcement forms part of a new five-year strategy across its member services and accreditations pillars, and more broadly under a new long-term ATIA strategy, Project A30.

Changes to ATAS arrive just over a year after ATIA changed its central branding from the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (*TD* 15 Aug 2023). *AB* More from ATIA on **page two**.

**Travel Daily**  
ON LOCATION  
ICC SYDNEY

Today’s issue of *TD* is brought to you by the Australian Travel Industry Association’s (ATIA) inaugural Beyond Borders Travel Summit.

THE time has finally arrived to attend the very first Beyond Borders Summit, and we can hardly contain our excitement. Taking place a day before the NTIAs, an esteemed list of speakers will deliver their unique take on how the travel sector is progressing. These include industry heavy hitters such as FCTG’s Graham ‘Skroo’ Turner, Globus family of brands local chief Gai Tyrell, and Royal Caribbean MD of ANZ, Gavin Smith, to name a few. See some of the big announcements made at the event in today’s issue.

**Today’s issue of *TD***  
*Travel Daily* today features seven pages of news, including a photo page from Eurail and Spain Tourism Board, and our Corporate Update.



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## Window Seat

THE travel industry can be thankful Flight Centre boss Graham 'Skroo' Turner doesn't apply skills from his early days as a vet to dealing with larger crises such as the pandemic.

Addressing ATIA's Beyond Borders Travel Summit in Sydney today, Skroo said vets deal with widespread health crises very differently, with lockdowns not front of mind.

"If there's a disease, and it's in the animal kingdom, there's a very simple solution.

"You round up the animals that are affected, shoot them, and burn them," he quipped.

## ATIA to launch insolvency protection

TRAVELLERS will be able to place greater trust in their ATIA-accredited agents and the safety of their money, with ATIA in talks to spearhead a new industry-led insolvency protection scheme.

The new program, unnamed at present, aims to plug a gap left by the dissolution of the Travel Compensation Fund (TCF) in 2014 as part of the government deregulation of the industry.

*Travel Daily* understands talks are underway and at various stages with a number of underwriters, with the scheme aiming to be operational in time for ATIA's 2026 fiscal year, which begins on 01 Apr.

Following the closure of the TCF, which was met at the time with mixed reactions from the industry, some retail consortia have since moved to set up trusts and other insurance schemes to safeguard client funds in the event of end-supplier failure.

Among these is TravelManagers' own Travel Compensation Fund, which was introduced two years ago (*TD* 11 Aug 2022).

ATIA Chief Executive Dean Long told *TD* the association will be engaging heavily with members over the coming year "to get that coverage right".

"That's been something I think large parts of the industry have been calling for the association to be doing for a number of years.

"In establishing the ATAS Advisory Committee and bringing in new voices to that space; and in getting new Directors onto the Board, it became very clear there

### Qantas contingency

QANTAS says it is not expecting any disruptions stemming from a planned strike by some of its engineering workers today.

The carrier says it has plans in place to mitigate the issue, with only 400 engineers represented by three unions taking part from its 2,600-strong engineering staff.



was a common risk that probably did need an industry-based solution best done at a market level, not a commercial level."

Long added there were a lot of learnings from the ATIA chargeback scheme that was in operation prior to COVID, giving the association good experience in setting up a similar program.

"It will mean that people who book with one of the 1,700 members we have around the country...can have a higher level of confidence - whether that be with a tour operator, an agent, a corporate or an online agent.

"Adding some protections in there will add consumer confidence and trade awareness that what we're doing is true value for them."

The scheme, once operational, will solely cover ATIA-accredited agents and suppliers, while airlines and businesses with no Australian presence will be excluded.

In coming years, ATIA said it may look into offering insolvency

protection to other parts of the travel industry not eligible for ATIA accreditation.

Long said it was critical the right people were around the table to co-design the right outcome, with ATIA eager to learn and leverage from the TravelManagers TCF as a good model worth studying.

"It's a great program," Long said, "and that's one of the things TravelManagers have been vocal on from the day of deregulation".

"That they wanted this type of protection - they took it by the horns and developed something that works well for their business.

"So they'll have some lessons, as we'll have lessons from running a chargeback scheme, and as long as we can improve that collective value, that's what it's about." *ML*



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## HLO premium TTV uplift

**HELLOWORLD** Travel Limited is seeing sales of business class flights increase, despite an overall 7% decline in air sales through its agency networks in Australia.

The company this morning revealed that business class TTV in Australia is up 2% while economy class TTV declined 2%, while in NZ air sales are in line with the same period last year, with a 6% increase in business class and a 6% drop in economy.

CEO Andrew Burnes said that travel remains in high demand especially among the older demographics which form a large part of the company's agency members' customer base, with positive trading results "broadly in line with our budgets".

Retail margins have improved by 0.15%, while ex Australia demand has increased significantly to Bali (up 23%), Vietnam (up 35%) and Japan (up 45%).

**MEANWHILE**, Burnes also confirmed the launch last month of a new events division called My Way Travel & Events (**TD**

breaking news), led by Simon Lethlean and Roger Field.

This fledgling business will provide "a convenient, reliable and streamlined solution for fans trying to secure multiple components of their live event experience," with initial product in market including theatre, concert and sporting events both in Australia and across the globe. **BP**

## Joyce speaks out

**A LACK** of innovation in new passenger aircraft was outlined by former Qantas CEO Alan Joyce as a major challenge for the industry.

Speaking with John Strickland on the **AIG Our Future Skies** podcast published this week, Joyce suggested there was "frustration" as there had been a "couple of opportunities missed", particularly the long-mooted mid-market plane media had dubbed the 797.

"You can always look back in the past, but Boeing, I always thought, shouldn't have gone for the re-engineering of the 737s," he said.

"They were looking at a new aircraft, they were also looking at potential spaces of replacing the 767 or the 757, and they had an aircraft that we thought would've been a phenomenal aircraft that they were looking at," he added, referring to the 797.

Joyce also named Airbus, saying it should have created a new narrow-body aircraft rather than re-engineer the A320 with the Neo variant, although he did laud innovation in the A220 and A321.

That China might come to the party in the near to medium future was also a talking point.

Joyce said, "the Chinese don't have a product today, but they may have a product in a decade... they're challenging the electrical car market - could they ever challenge the aerospace market?"

"Of course they can - and that may create a dynamic that has a lot more innovation, there's a lot more change."

## CATO's Fine addition

**FINE** by Nature, a Victorian-based boutique wholesale travel company, has become a member of the Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO).

Founded by Leila Myllymaki-Hay, Fine by Nature offers custom-made journeys in Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and parts of Scandinavia, helping travellers connect deeply with local traditions, food, and culture.

Joining CATO is "an exciting step" for the business, Myllymaki-Hay said.

"We are thrilled to align ourselves with an organisation that shares our values of professionalism and integrity.

"This affiliation ensures we adhere to the highest industry standards, giving our clients peace of mind that they are booking with a reliable and credible provider."

## Rex to flip Pel-Air for \$47m



**REX** Group will look to wipe out a significant portion of its mounting secured debt through the sale of its Pel-Air Ambulance for more than \$47 million (**TD** breaking news yesterday).

According to an update to the ASX, "certain members" of the struggling aviation business have entered into an agreement to sell the profitable arm to an entity owned by Toll Holdings.

Pel-Air has been a strong-performing arm of the Rex business, having secured a 12-year contract with Ambulance Victoria worth over \$300 million in 2022, as well as strong revenue injections from contracts with NSW Ambulance in recent years.

Reflecting on the news of the potential divestment, Federal Transport Minister, Catherine King, said it was important passengers continued to patronise Rex's operations, despite the prospect of a sale.

"The Commonwealth continues to guarantee ticket sales throughout the voluntary administration and we are pleased that Australians have confidence booking flights as bookings are holding up well," King said.

"My department continues to meet daily with the administrator and we will provide any relevant updates as the voluntary administration period continues."

In Aug, the Federal Government announced it would step in and protect bookings made on Rex flights during the administration

period in instances of cancellation and rescheduling (**TD** 16 Aug).

The transaction is subject to regulatory approvals by the Foreign Investment Review Board, and if the sale passes all approvals, it is expected to be settled in Q4 of this year. **AB**

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## Qantas plots big growth

**QANTAS** is forecasting a 15% uplift in overall group international capacity for the full 2025-2026 financial year (*TD* breaking news), while slower growth of around 1% is expected across the domestic operations.

A trading update issued ahead of today's QF Annual General Meeting in Hobart noted stable demand for both Qantas and Jetstar, while unit revenue within the JQ domestic business is "outperforming previous expectations due to stronger than anticipated travel demand".

QF domestic load factors and demand for corporate travel continue to improve year-on-year, the company said, while growth is also expected in underlying earnings within the Qantas Loyalty division following the launch of Classic Plus Flight Rewards earlier

this year (*TD* 08 Apr).

Global geopolitical events continue to create volatility in fuel prices, the carrier noted, with disciplined hedging by Qantas seeing a \$2.55 billion expected fuel cost for the six months to 31 Dec this year.

The airline also announced a \$28 million 'thank you payment' to around 27,000 Qantas Group employees "as part of recognising the contribution they have made over the past year".

The update came alongside industrial action by about 600 line maintenance engineers who are implementing stoppages across all major airports today as part of an ongoing pay dispute. *BP*

## APT reveals NZ '25

**APT** has unveiled its New Zealand 2025/26 tours, offering travellers a brand-new itinerary exploring the South Island.

The 12-day 'South Island Odyssey' tour showcases the region's landscapes and wildlife, offering a privately chartered cruise to encounter Kaikoura's dusky dolphins, a stay at Te Waonui Forest Retreat in Franz Josef, and a wine tasting at Allan Scott Family Winemakers HQ.

**CLICK HERE** for more pricing and details.

## G's five new yachts

**G ADVENTURES** has announced the launch of five yachts for its 2025 European sailing season in Greece.

The nearly 57ft-long boats can carry 10 travellers in five cabins, which can be configured to be either twin or double, with each vessel featuring a fully-equipped galley, a comfortable communal area, and a sun-drenched deck.

The new fleet will be deployed in Greece between now and Jun ahead of the 2025 season running from Apr to Oct - for details, see today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

## SPAIN WITH ENTIRE TRAVEL GROUP DAY 4

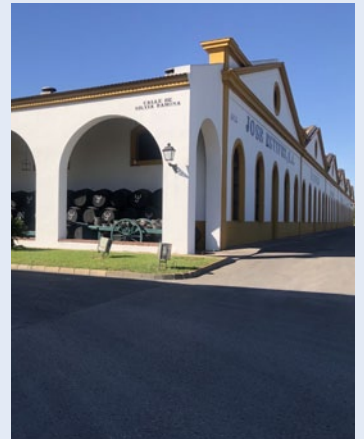


**NO VISIT** to Europe is complete without art, architecture and fine wine – that is precisely what 10 lucky travel agents enjoyed on day four of their Entire Group Journeys' famil to southern Spain.

At 9am, the group boarded a comfortable, private bus for a three-hour tour of Seville, led by local expert Juan. Highlights included the grand Plaza de España, the Guadalquivir River, the charming streets of Santa Cruz, and the impressive exteriors of the Royal Palace (Alcazar) and Seville Cathedral – two of the city's landmarks. With such a small group, everyone had the chance to chat with Juan, making for an intimate and enriching experience.

After lunch it was off to Jerez de la Frontera, where Carmen, their guide, welcomed the group with a brief walking tour through the city's historic streets before moving on to the Marqués del Real Tesoro Bodega. There, the group got a behind-the-scenes look at the art of sherry production, visited the stunning Lusitano horse stables, and wandered through an art gallery featuring works by Picasso and Dalí. The tour wrapped up with some delightful sherry tasting - the perfect way to cap off the afternoon before heading back to Seville for a relaxed dinner.

**TOP:** The famil group - Santo, Kate, Tara, Abby, Kate, Laurin, Tim, Molly, Jo and Robin.



**Famil IN FOCUS** is our feature showcasing some of the photos from recent industry famils. If you want your famil to be featured, email [advertising@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:advertising@traveldaily.com.au).

## Reset in Phuket

**RENOWNED** Australian nutritionist and wellness expert, Faye James, is hosting a wellness retreat at Amatar Welleisure Retreat in Phuket, Thailand in Mar 2025.

The seven-day 'Menopause Reset: A Holistic Journey to Wellness' is designed to help women navigate the challenges of menopause in a supportive, luxurious environment, with expert-led guidance.

"Our guests will not only enjoy the natural beauty and tranquillity of Phuket, but they'll also leave with a deeper understanding of their bodies and the tools they need to manage this life stage with confidence," James said.

Restricted to just 12 guests, the retreat will include hormone-balancing nutrition workshops, fitness sessions designed for menopausal bodies, mindfulness activities, and expert-led group discussions on mental and emotional wellbeing.

Find out more **HERE**.

## Eurail & Spain spotlight slow travel

**SUSTAINABLE** travel options and off-the-beaten path exploration were the focus of a series of 'slow travel' themed events hosted by Eurail and the Spain Tourism Board this week.

The week-long roadshow wrapped up in Perth last night after visiting Sydney and Brisbane, featuring presentations by Eurail and Spain Tourism Board, as well as Spanish tapas, paella and wines, colourful flamenco performances, and exciting prize giveaways.

Travel agents and trade partners learnt about Eurail's and the Spain Tourism Board's shared mission to get more Australian travellers to venture beyond popular tourist cities to discover less-visited communities.

The two organisations also told attendees about their shared goal to promote responsible and sustainable travel options, and more immersive travel.

Guests were encouraged to think more consciously about their own travel choices, with tips like avoiding the high-season crowds and prices, and to inspire their clients to embrace the notion of 'slow travel'.



**EURAIL'S** Silvia Festa and Andrew Cavallaro from Helm present 2x Eurail Passes to Sydney winner Kirsty Nichols from Planetdwellers.

**ESTHER** Romero, Andalucia Tourism; Andrew Cavallaro, Helm; and Marta Fernandez Martin, Spain Tourism Board.



**FIONA** Ford, Encanto Travel; Marta Fernandez Martin, Spain Tourism Board; and Esther Romero, Andalucia Tourism at the Sydney event.



**MARTA** Fernandez Martin from Spain Tourism Board is pictured with Nicholas Kennedy from Travelcation Group, who won a \$250 Iris Rooftop Spanish Restaurant Voucher, and Andrew Cavallaro from Helm.



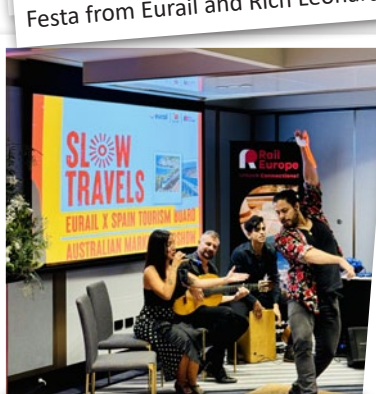
**GRANT** Robertson, Rail Europe; Rich Leonard, Rail Europe; Silvia Festa, Eurail; Marta Fernandez Martin, Spain Tourism Board; and Andrew Cavallaro, Helm.



**ANDREW** Cavallaro from Helm; Marta Fernandez Martin, Spain Tourism Board; Silvia Festa, Eurail; and Rich Leonard, Rail Europe.



**HELM'S** Andrew Cavallaro presents Anna Lehmann from Itineraries Travel with 2x Eurail prizes, with Silvia Festa from Eurail and Rich Leonard from Rail Europe.



**BRISBANE** guests are regaled by a flamenco performance.



**PAULINE** Peralta (centre) from Kreative Travel took home a \$250 Gildas Spanish Restaurant voucher.



**GILDAS** Spanish Restaurant supplied the food for the Sydney event.



**FLAMENCO** dancers put on a show for Sydney guests.

## CORPORATE UPDATE

### So sustainable, Sydney

**SYDNEY** has been named as the top Australian city on the Global Sustainability Index, ranking 10th out of 40 cities.

Melbourne finished 24th, while Brisbane came 33rd.

The cities that beat Sydney on the list included Helsinki in the top place, followed by Gothenburg, Copenhagen, Bergen, Aarhus, Bordeaux, Singapore, Oslo and Belfast.

According to Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore, the global accolade highlights the city's sustainability efforts, driven in part by its Sustainable Destination Partnership, which supports the event and hospitality sectors to conduct business more sustainably.

"Taking strong action on climate change is one of our highest priorities, and given 75% of global emissions are generated in cities, our action is critical," Moore said.



"People across the globe already know that Sydney is an amazing place to visit and this ranking helps put our city top of mind when organisers are looking at vibrant and sustainable destinations to bring conferences and conventions." *JHM*

### UA winter schedule

**UNITED** Airlines will add flights at more than 140 US airports as part of its largest-ever winter schedule, which will see it operate nearly 4,600 services per day.

Released overnight, the northern winter schedule began this week, with a focus on Africa, southern Europe and Latin America along with domestic ski and sun hubs.

The season will begin with UA's first flights linking New York Newark with Marrakech, with other new city pairs including Houston to Medellin and New York Newark to Dominica.

Domestically, United will launch new services from Washington DC to Salt Lake City and Palm Springs.

### QF new ME partner

**QANTAS** frequent flyers can soon earn and redeem points on flights operated by Oman Air as part of a new partnership.

Under the tie-up, travellers will have a new way to access the Middle East, Europe and Africa, travelling via the full-service Oman Air, which operates more than 700 flights each week.

The partnership precedes Oman Air's formal entry into the Oneworld Alliance, expected to be completed later this year.

### Discover our Adventure Special Report



### New Stars join alliance team



**STAR** Alliance has beefed up its management team with four new key executives.

Ambar Franco has joined the global airline alliance as Vice President, Customer Experience, leading projects designed to enhance the overall customer journey across the business.

Luc Lachoux has taken on the role of Vice President, Digital and Technology and Renato Ramos is Star Alliance's new Vice President, Strategy.

Meanwhile, Gayatheri Silvakumar is now Vice President, People and Culture.

She previously held senior HR roles in companies like McCann Worldgroup and Rolls-Royce.

"I am delighted to work with such a diverse leadership team," said Star Alliance Chief Executive Officer, Theo Panagiotoulas, of the new hires (**pictured**).

"They bring their extensive experience from within and outside the aviation industry to fast-track our mission of delivering a seamless customer experience at key touch points in their travels." *JHM*

### CX's 50 for Sydney

**CATHAY** Pacific is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its inaugural direct flights between Sydney and Hong Kong this week.

Since the carrier first began operating on the route in Oct 1974, eliminating the need for layovers across Australia and Asia, the service has expanded significantly, growing from a daily flight to double, triple, and now four daily flights.

Sydney Airport's Group Executive for Aviation Growth & Group Strategy, Greg Botham, said the airport was proud to celebrate the milestone.

"This iconic route has been a vital cornerstone of our Asia network, fostering connections and promoting tourism between two major cities.

"Cathay Pacific's unwavering commitment to service and excellence has played a pivotal role in enhancing Sydney Airport's position as a global gateway, and we look forward to many more years of partnership and growth together," he enthused.



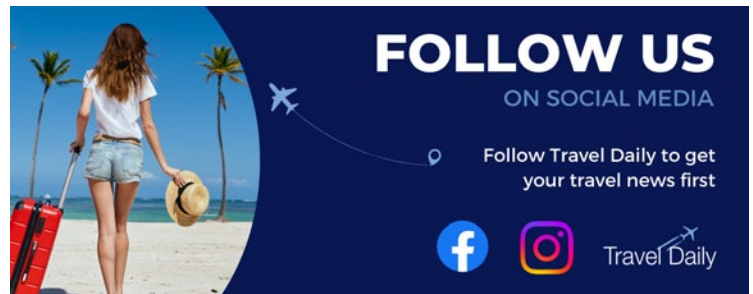
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Save up to \$1,500 during **Railbookers'** biggest sale of the year. The company is offering up to \$800 off, plus an additional \$600 per couple on select seven-night-plus luxury packages. Railbookers is also offering a \$100 gift card to use towards your clients' next holiday. **CLICK HERE** to see all destinations on sale.

Savings of more than \$2,000 are available on a rare luxury voyage across the Indian Ocean, for bookings made through **Cruise Traveller** by the end of next month. The Ponant cruise links Sri Lanka and South Africa, with a saving of \$2,070 per person on an all-inclusive package, plus a private car tour of Sri Lanka. **CLICK HERE** to book and for more info on the package.

**Singapore Airlines** has announced the launch of its Europe Explorer Sale, available on a wide range of fares from Australia for travel next year. Economy rates include Milan from \$1,369, Istanbul from \$1,378, and Brussels from \$1,539. **CLICK HERE** to access fare sheets.

**Ayers Rock Resort** is marking its 40th birthday with a "monolithic" 40-hour sale on accommodation. The sale, which started yesterday at 12pm AEST, is available for bookings of up to two people - **CLICK HERE** to make a reservation and for more information.

**Scenic Luxury Cruises & Tours'** super earlybird offers for next year end on 31 Oct, and are available on selected European river cruises of 11 days or more. Economy flights are included in the offer, plus an extra \$800 per person in savings, or up to \$4,500 per person toward business class flights - view more offers **HERE**.

**Virgin Australia** has launched a network-wide sale, with one million fares available from \$49. The seven-day sale is available through Mon, on international destinations such as Fiji, Tokyo, and Samoa; or local favourites such as Hamilton Island, Gold Coast, and Perth. Sale fares are available to book **HERE**.

Now is the last chance for your travellers to take advantage of **Outback Spirit** earlybird savings for next year. Almost 30 Outback Spirit itineraries are up for grabs at a discounted rate, with savings of up to \$2,995 per person. Book your clients via the Outback Spirit online booking engine **HERE**.

**Jetstar Airways** is encouraging Australians to save money - and brain power - with its Pacific Islands 'Mindlessness' package sale. The low-cost airline is inviting travellers to combine flights and hotels in a package, from under \$1,000 per person twin share. Deals start at \$949, departing Perth. Included are return Starter fares, accommodation, 20 kilograms of checked baggage, seat selection, and a variety of inclusions, such as daily breakfast, late checkout, room upgrades, and dining vouchers. Phuket, Vanuatu, Rarotonga, Honolulu, and Fiji are included in the sale - **CLICK HERE** for more information.

## Agents have a ball in Hanoi



**CONSOLIDATED** Travel teamed up with Singapore Airlines recently to take 10 lucky agents on a famil trip to Hanoi, Vietnam.

Over the span of five days, the group had the chance to immerse themselves in the city's vibrant culture and rich history.

The journey kicked off with visits to Hanoi's main attractions, including the Old Quarter and the Ho Chi Minh Quarter.

A highlight of the trip was sipping coffee at the iconic Train Street (**pictured**), where the agents experienced the unique thrill of watching trains pass by just inches away.

The group also participated in a cooking class with Know One Teach One (KOTO), a social enterprise dedicated to transforming the lives of at-risk and disadvantaged youth through hospitality training.

Agents learned to master the art of local cuisine while also gaining insight into the impactful work being done to create positive, lasting change in the community.

"This familiarisation trip was more than just a travel experience; it was a journey of cultural immersion and social awareness,

leaving a lasting impression on all who participated," enthused Consolidated Travel, with the brand giving special thanks to Focus Asia and Indochina. *JM*

## Hyatt Huangshan

**HYATT** Hotels Corporation has announced the opening of a new property in the Chinese city of Huangshan, ideal for travellers looking to explore the rich cultural heritage of Huizhou's mountains, rivers and valleys.

Located in the heart of Anhui Province, Hyatt Regency Huangshan Hengjiangwan offers 250 modern guestrooms and suites featuring spacious workspaces, HD TVs, Bluetooth speakers, and coffee and tea-making amenities, as well as a private balcony.

Guests can dine at three venues, including a cafe, Chinese restaurant, and The Lounge, which offers fine wines, cocktails and freshly brewed coffee.

The new hotel also boasts a 24-hour fitness centre and indoor swimming pool, as well as a playground and flexible indoor meeting spaces.