



## Today's issue of TD

**Travel Daily** today features six pages of industry news, including a photo page from **Viking** and our **Corporate Update**, plus a full page from **Abercrombie & Kent**.

## Save big with A&K

**ABERCROMBIE & Kent (A&K)** is highlighting its tailor-made Africa journeys, with couples able to save up to \$4,000 - head to the **back page** to see what's on offer.

## Win a wellness stay

**CHIVA-SOM** has partnered with Thai Airways to offer Australian agents the chance to win a complimentary three-night wellness retreat in celebration of its 30th anniversary in 2025.

To be eligible, agents will need to book and deposit a five-night retreat or longer between 01 Apr-30 Jul - contact Travel the World at 02 8296 7074 to learn more.

## Travel free of Trump tariff

**TRIPS** to the United States are not expected to become more expensive on the back of sweeping tariffs imposed yesterday by US President Donald Trump.

According to an update from the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) and Federal Trade Minister Don Farrell, short-term travel to the US will be exempt from the tariffs.

"Following President Trump's announcement of a base level 10% tariff on all imports, we have received a briefing from the Trade Minister's office on the impacts



on the travel industry," ATIA said in a statement.

"At this stage, it is understood that the 10% base will apply to goods and not services or people.

"There has been some suggestion that the US was considering this but the mechanism for doing so is unclear, so an announcement has not been made.

"This means at this stage, there are no tariffs on travel.

"We will continue to monitor developments, and have follow up discussions with the Trade Minister's office," ATIA added. *ML*

## Insignia departing

**OCEANIA** Cruises has sold its 684-passenger ship *Insignia* to Crescent Seas, which will turn the ship into its second of five planned residential ships.

*Insignia* will depart the Oceania fleet in late 2027 - more details in today's edition of **Cruise Weekly**.

## IndiGo appoints

**THE** Walshe Group has named Shubham Gulati as IndiGo Airlines' National Sales Manager, Division, effective immediately.

The announcement follows the appointment of The Walshe Group as the Indian carrier's general sales agent for Australia and New Zealand (**TD** 11 Mar).

Gulati brings over 17 years of travel sector experience to the role, including stints at Oman Airways, OYO Homes and Hotels, and EaseMyTrip.com.

He also previously worked at IndiGo as Sales Manager from 2007-2019.

## Contiki flash sale

**CONTIKI** is offering 20% off trips to Europe as part of its new flash sale, on until 08 Apr.

Savings are available on 34 departures, including Italy, Croatia, Ireland, and France.

Find out more **HERE**, and for more specials, see **page six**.



## NORTH COAST RAIL TOUR

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HERITAGE TWIN  
FROM \$3,595\*PP

SAVE UP TO  
\$600\*PP

JOURNEY BEYOND

\*T&Cs Apply



## TravelRez rizzes up plaform

**TRAVELREZ**, the tech arm of Queensland-based agency Magic Tours International Group, has launched a new and improved flexible independent travel (FIT) booking platform.

Designed to meet the needs of agents, the platform offers a smarter, faster and more intuitive experience, allowing advisors to easily build complex itineraries using multiple products, and then send out quotes and convert them into bookings.

"TravelRez is about making the agent's job easier and more profitable," said Shayne Williamson, Director of IT and Agent Experience at TravelRez.

"We're giving consultants the power to sell more efficiently, reduce admin time, and deliver better client experiences - all from one intuitive platform."

Features include a refreshed user interface, and a smart multi-product itinerary building

tool that includes flights, accommodation, and transfers, as well as tours, cruises, rail, car hire, and ski holidays.

Additionally, advisors will benefit from the platform's integration with Sabre, allowing them to book flights directly with real-time availability and accurate pricing, as well as ticketing support every day of the week and zero added booking fees.

Request a demo or find out more [HERE](#). *JM*

### Taieri gets repp'd

**AFTER** a hiatus during the pandemic, Dunedin's iconic Taieri Gorge Scenic Train is once again welcoming passengers, and is now represented by the New Zealand Travel Collective.

The network said it will focus on reintroducing the scenic rail experience to both domestic and international markets.

## Easter bookings up

**QUEENSLAND** is recovering strongly after ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred, with Accor hotels across the state recording a 30% increase in Easter long weekend bookings, compared to last year.

Cairns, which has experienced heavy rains recently, is leading Queensland destinations with a 63% rise in Easter bookings versus 2024, while Tropical North Queensland is up 43% and the Gold Coast is ahead by 32%.

"The coordinated efforts of Tourism Events Queensland and Experience Gold Coast, supported by airlines and hotel groups like ours, have been instrumental in driving a strong Easter holiday period for the tourism industry," said Accor Pacific Chief Operating Officer PM&E, Adrian Williams.

Overall, Accor has seen a 27% national increase in hotel bookings for Easter, with its Canberra properties up 103% year-on-year, followed by Melbourne (41%) & Sydney (14%).

## TC expands in Qld

**TRAVELLERS** Choice has welcomed two new members in North Queensland, including Reguson Travel & Cruise.

The family-owned business was opened in Townsville in 2013 by Rane Reguson, who was named the inaugural winner of the Emirates Travel Consultant Scholarship at the National Travel Industry Awards.

The agency decided to join Travellers Choice because of its track record of helping independent agents achieve sustained success, Reguson said.

Also joining is newly launched agency NQ Travel & Cruise, which is owned by Kathleen Lynch (**pictured**) and based in the rural town of Ingham.



## Enhanced servicing support for Qantas NDC



Our new Qantas NDC support tools are designed to enhance your booking experience and streamline servicing, helping you better support your customers.



### Support pages

See live issues, find workarounds and check your capabilities



### Live Assist

Click to chat for assistance with NDC bookings



### Contact us form

Log new issues, or get technical support

[Start exploring these new tools today](#)



## EK adds third daily to MEL



**EMIRATES** has commenced a third daily non-stop service between Melbourne and Dubai, which has also marked the Australian debut of the airline's newly retrofitted Boeing 777. The third daily service began on Sun, bringing Emirates' "game-changer" first class suites to Australia for the first time. Melbourne has also become the first city in the country to

offer the airline's new premium economy cabin.

EK404 will depart Dubai at 21:15, arriving in Melbourne at 17:40; the return leg, EK405, will depart at 23:55 and arrive in Dubai at 06:55.

The new aircraft includes six first class suites, 38 business class seats, 24 seats in premium, and 256 economy class seats.

"Melbourne holds a special place in Emirates' heart, being the first city where we began our Australian journey nearly three decades ago," said Regional Sales Manager Dean Clever, **pictured right** with Melbourne Airport Head of Media & Communications Andrew Lund.

"Now Melbourne is among the first cities to experience our newly retrofitted Boeing 777 and becomes the first city on our Australian network to offer our award-winning Premium Economy cabin across all services," he added. *MS*

## Moreton gets more

**THE** Moreton Bay region is emerging as one of Queensland's strongest growing tourism destinations, with latest data revealing the region welcomed 3.9 million visitors in 2024 and recorded 5.2 million visitor nights.

While total visitor numbers saw a small decline compared to 2023, new data reveals that those who do visit are staying longer and exploring more.

Overnight visitor numbers rose by 15.5% year-on-year, and visitor nights were up by 37.6%, resulting in 1.4 million additional nights spent in the region by tourists in 2024.

"This growth in overnight stays is a strong indicator that people aren't just coming to Moreton Bay for the day - they're choosing to immerse themselves in the experiences our region offers," said Luke Edwards, CEO of Visit Moreton Bay.

International tourism has been a key driver for the uplift, with international visitor nights almost doubling over the past year.

## Batik commission

**BATIK** Air Malaysia has introduced 10% commission on all flight-related ancillaries, including prepaid baggage, prepaid meals and paid seats.

The commission applies to ancillaries sold under EMD-A issuance through global distribution systems, including Sabre, Travelport and Amadeus.

The carrier noted that baggage ancillary via Amadeus is not currently available, but will come online "in due course".



## JB unveils Monarto rail packages

**JOURNEY** Beyond (JB) has announced a new Rail City Stay package at Monarto Safari Resort, ahead of the SA property's opening on 28 May (**TD** 03 Feb).

The offering is designed as an extension for guests beginning or ending their train journey in Adelaide when travelling on The Ghan, Indian Pacific and Great Southern.

Guests will enjoy a private transfer to the resort, which is an hour's drive from Adelaide, before spending two nights including a daily breakfast.

They will experience a premium Sunset Safari onboard a custom-made safari vehicle, exploring 550 hectares of wide-open plains home to free-roaming herds of African animals.

Additionally, travellers will be treated to sundowner drinks and canapes, and receive a general

admission entry to Monarto Safari Park to explore the park at their leisure with a guided hop-on-hop-off park loop bus.

"Guests will be able to view southern white rhinoceroses, cheetahs, hippos, zebras, giraffes, antelopes and ostriches as they gather around waterholes and roam the grassland plains," said Alicia Triggs, Executive GM of Sales and Partnerships at Journey Beyond.

Bookings and packages for Monarto Safari Stay are on sale now, starting from \$4,135 for a five-night stay for guests travelling on the Indian Pacific from Perth to Adelaide, as well as two six-night packages available for the Great Southern and The Ghan - details **HERE**. *JM*

## ETIAS by late 2025

**THE** European Union will launch its new border management Entry/Exit System (EES) in the last quarter of 2025, more than three years later than originally planned.

EU Home Affairs Ministers have endorsed a progressive rollout plan on the start of operations for the EES, with a six-month phased introduction once legislators from each country have adopted it.

A specific date is yet to be decided on when the EES will take effect, but it is expected it will operate for around a year before the associated European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) comes into force.

The new system is tipped to take effect from late 2026 and will impact Australian travellers entering Europe for short holidays.

Once ETIAS is in operation, travellers from non-EU member will need to pay €7 (A\$12) for a travel authorisation, which will allow entry for up to 90 days in any 180-day period.



Disney  
**DAYS**  
2025

**Disney Days is back!**

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**Auckland**  
22 May

**Melbourne**  
26 May

**Sydney**  
28 May

Disneyland **70**  
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visit Anaheim  
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## Viking hosts an Antarctic adventure

**EARLIER** this year, Viking took 11 travel partners and their companions on an unforgettable journey to Antarctica aboard the award-winning *Viking Polar*.

They were incredibly lucky with the weather, sailing across the Drake Passage in rare 'Drake Lake' conditions in both directions.

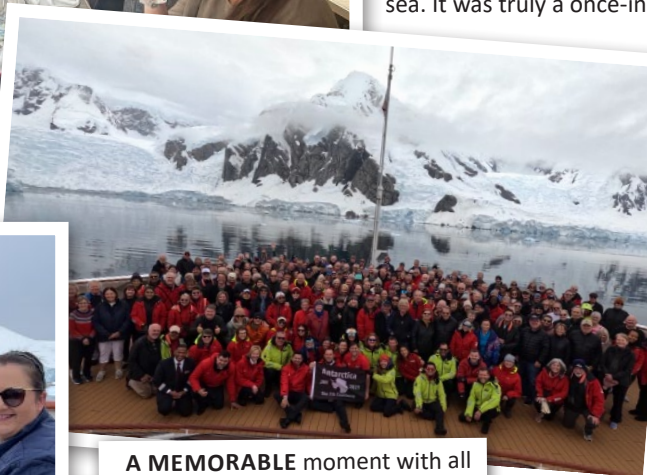
Once in Antarctica, the group got up close to wildlife and explored the ice-covered landscape using Viking's expedition equipment.

They cruised on Zodiacs and Special Operations Boats, paddled in two-seater kayaks, and even dived beneath the surface in submarines, making the most of every moment in this remote part of the world.

Back on board, there was no shortage of ways to unwind and stay engaged. With six dining options to choose from, complimentary access to the Nordic Spa, and working alongside scientists, the group made the most of their time at sea. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime adventure.



**A PRIVATE** dining experience on board *Viking Polar*.



**A MEMORABLE** moment with all guests on the bow of *Viking Polar*.



**ADAM** Wren, Karen Van Huisstede, Amy Slater, Marie Holman & Keira Smith.

**BYRON** Horne from Bicton Travel.



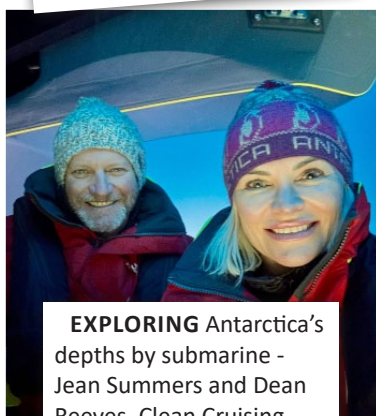
**KEIRA** Smith, Viking and Michelle Ashcroft, Phil Hoffman Travel.



**FAREWELL** drinks in 'The Hide' onboard *Viking Polar*.



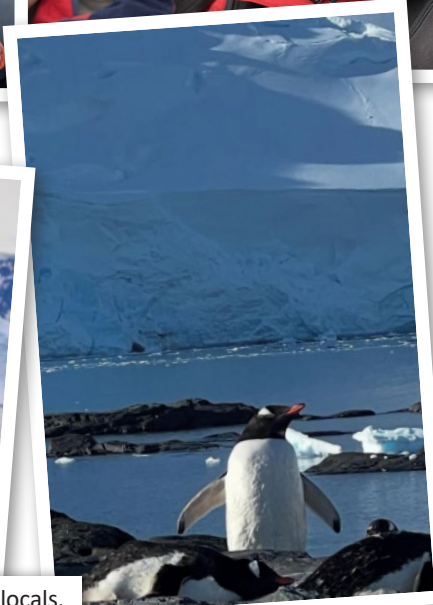
**SMILES** all round while exploring Antarctica by Zodiac.



**EXPLORING** Antarctica's depths by submarine - Jean Summers and Dean Reeves, Clean Cruising.



**HANGING** with the locals.





## CORPORATE UPDATE

### AI abounds in corporate travel

**MORE** than 90% of business travel managers are using AI, according to new research released by Serko and Sabre Corporation.

The 2025 *State of AI in Corporate Travel: Unlocking Opportunities, Overcoming Challenges* report reveals the main reason behind AI use is for cost savings (71%), followed by enhancing the traveller experience (68%), and improving data analysis (63%).

More than half (52%) of respondents said AI has exceeded expectations, particularly when it comes to booking optimisation (73%), pricing and cost savings (70%), and chatbot-based traveller support (64%).

"The corporate travel industry is moving quickly from exploring AI and genAI to deeply embedding it into their operations," said Sundar Narasimhan, SVP and President, Sabre Labs.

"What was once a 'nice-to-

have' is becoming an operational necessity - companies that fail to integrate AI-driven decision-making risk falling behind."

When it comes to roadblocks faced by business travel managers using AI, the research identified implementation hurdles (46%), lack of internal talent (19%), and budget constraints (14%).

See the full report [HERE](#). JM

### New charging rules

**FCM** Travel is calling on business travellers who rely on portable chargers and power banks to be aware of new plane restrictions surrounding these devices.

GM ANZ Renos Rologas said at least six international carriers that operate in and out of Australia had begun implementing the new rules this month, including Singapore Airlines, and believes others will follow suit soon.

"A lot of Asian carriers are introducing the new requirements, and it includes many that Australians know and frequent, so it's important that travellers understand these new restrictions and the impact it will have on them.

"Safety is the priority, but there are workarounds and other strategies to making sure you're keeping charged and connected, particularly on the longer haul trips," Rologas said.

He suggests travellers pack a charging cord in their carry-on that has a USB connection.

### BCD appoints SVP

**BCD** Travel has appointed Stephanie DeNote as Senior Vice President of Travel Commerce, a new role focused on enhancing the company's booking and trip management experience for travellers and agents.

DeNote joins from CWT, where she worked for 25 years, most recently as Vice President Product Management, Travel Experience and Content.



[Click here to discover](#)

### FCTG names incentive winner



**FLIGHT** Centre Cherrybrook agent Sam Stratten has six nights in Vancouver to look forward to after being selected as the winner of a recent incentive.

The incentive invited agents to complete the Vancouver Specialist Program and Air Canada's Global Sales University between 10 Feb and 10 Mar to go into the draw.

Up for grabs was a major prize consisting of round-trip airfares to

Canada, two nights at Pan Pacific Vancouver, two nights at Marriott Downtown Pinnacle and two at the Douglas Hotel.

Thrown in for good measure is a guided Discover Canada Tours adventure, a Granville Island Market Tour courtesy of Vancouver Foodie Tours and a Destination Experience pass, which opens the doors to a range of the city's top attractions including Grouse Mountain.

"The training I completed has also empowered me in my role to become more confident when creating itineraries for my clients," Stratten said.

"Not only do I come across as more confident, but also more passionate - Vancouver will also be top on my list of recommendations for holidays to Canada," he added. ML

Stratten is **pictured** above centre with Dianna Schinella, Destination Vancouver; and Denise Uribe, Air Canada.

### SAF registry live

**THE** International Air Transport Association has launched the Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) Registry, now live under the Civil Aviation Decarbonization Organization.

The platform ensures all airlines have access to SAF and that their SAF purchases can be claimed against any climate-related obligations, accelerating the industry's transition to net zero emissions by 2050.



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Auckland

## SPECIALS

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If you're planning your clients' Christmas getaways already, savings of up to \$600 per person are now available from **Wendy Wu Tours** on many of its festive departures in Japan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, China, Africa and more. For bookings made before 30 Apr, save the top rate on 2025 tours or \$400pp on 2026 itineraries. **CLICK HERE** for more information.

Secure a saving of up to \$400 per couple on **Mat McLachlan Battlefield Tours'** earlybird deals for Anzac Day 2026 for bookings made by 30 Jun.

Lock in a discount of up to \$800 in **Railbookers 'Flash Sale'** on a variety of itineraries. Save \$700 per couple on the 13-day 'Iconic Europe: Rome to Paris' tour or \$200 on 'The Glacier Express' itinerary from Zurich to Basel. Great rates are available on a range of tours - **CLICK HERE** for the full list.

**HX Expeditions** is offering a free upgrade to a suite on selected voyages departing in 2025-27. Eligible itineraries are available in Alaska, Antarctica, North West Passage, Greenland, Iceland, Europe, South America and Svalbard. **CLICK HERE** for more info or call 1300 159 127.

With Easter just around the corner, **Seibu Prince Hotels and Resorts** is delivering some treats with a range of deals at Australian properties in time for the school holidays. A 'Kids Stay Free' deal has been introduced at numerous Seibu resorts, with other perks including free chocolate eggs and activity packs also available. More details **HERE**.

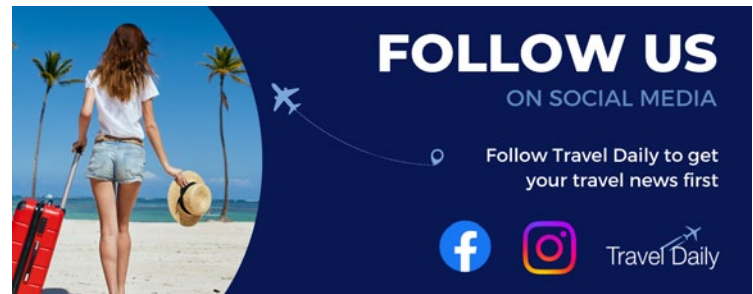
Japan just keeps getting better in value, with **All Nippon Airways** including a free domestic side trip in its latest fare offer. The 'Hello Blue Sale' is valid on flights departing Sydney and Perth for bookings made by 08 Apr, with low season return fares starting at \$910. Details **HERE**.

**Daydream Island Resort and Living Reef** has released a new 'Family Holiday Package' starting from \$310 per night. Included is a \$200 food and beverage credit, 50% off ferry transfers, drinks vouchers and free access to the kids club, plus more. **CLICK HERE** to find out more.

Enjoy a little more luxury with **Explora Journeys'** 'Upgrade Your Ocean' offer, with a free one-category suite upgrade and savings of up to 25% now available across a range of voyages. Take advantage of the deal on a plethora of itineraries across three Explora ships. Book by 03 Jun.

Solo travellers interested in a **Murray River Paddlesteamers** adventure can save up to \$2,520, with the line scrapping its single surcharge on three-, four- and seven-night cruises in 2025, excluding Sep. Cruise onboard the *PS Emmylou*, with fares starting from \$1,800 or \$4,200 for the week-long journey. Book by 30 Jun with more details **HERE**.

A once-in-a-lifetime experience awaits at New Zealand's famous Franz Josef Glacier, with **Ngai Tahu Tourism** cutting \$50 from its Glacier Encounter ticket. Ideal for families, the discount means a family of four can save \$200 to witness one of NZ's natural marvels - **CLICK HERE**.



## Bali's creative city to see 3m



**BALI'S** Nuanu Creative City is set to welcome more than three million visitors in 2025, with over 30 projects to gradually be unveiled throughout the year.

Spanning 44 hectares along the coastline of Tabanan, the burgeoning city is aiming to redefine tourism in Bali, and features dedicated spaces that centre around art and culture, health and wellness, and nature.

"This year marks a turning point for Nuanu," said Lev Kroll, Chief Executive of Nuanu.

"To support this milestone, we have introduced a ticketing system and curated day packages that provide structure while allowing guests to explore Nuanu at their own pace."

Nuanu has also committed to preserving 70% of its land as green space, with policies like a no large tree-cutting rule, a fuel-free vehicle zone, and a reforestation initiative.

Visitors will enjoy a women-only space, cultural village, butterfly dome, dance studio, wellness sanctuary, a multimedia

park featuring eight interactive art installations, and five different dining options, including seaside sanctuary Luna Beach Club (**pictured**).

Nuanu will also play host to several international festivals. *JM*

## Stargazing in Utah

**THE** Utah Office of Tourism is highlighting the state as a world-leading astrotourism destination during Dark Sky Month this Apr.

Utah offers 26 accredited Dark Sky International places, including Natural Bridges National Monument, the first-ever dark sky designated park in the world, the Mighty 5 national parks, nine state parks, and five towns.

"For Australians and New Zealanders seeking unique and unforgettable travel experiences, Utah's dark sky is an unforgettable experience and a great addition to any road trip through the western USA," said Corey Marshall, AU/NZ Account Director for Utah Office of Tourism - learn more **HERE**.



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14 days from \$39,995 pp

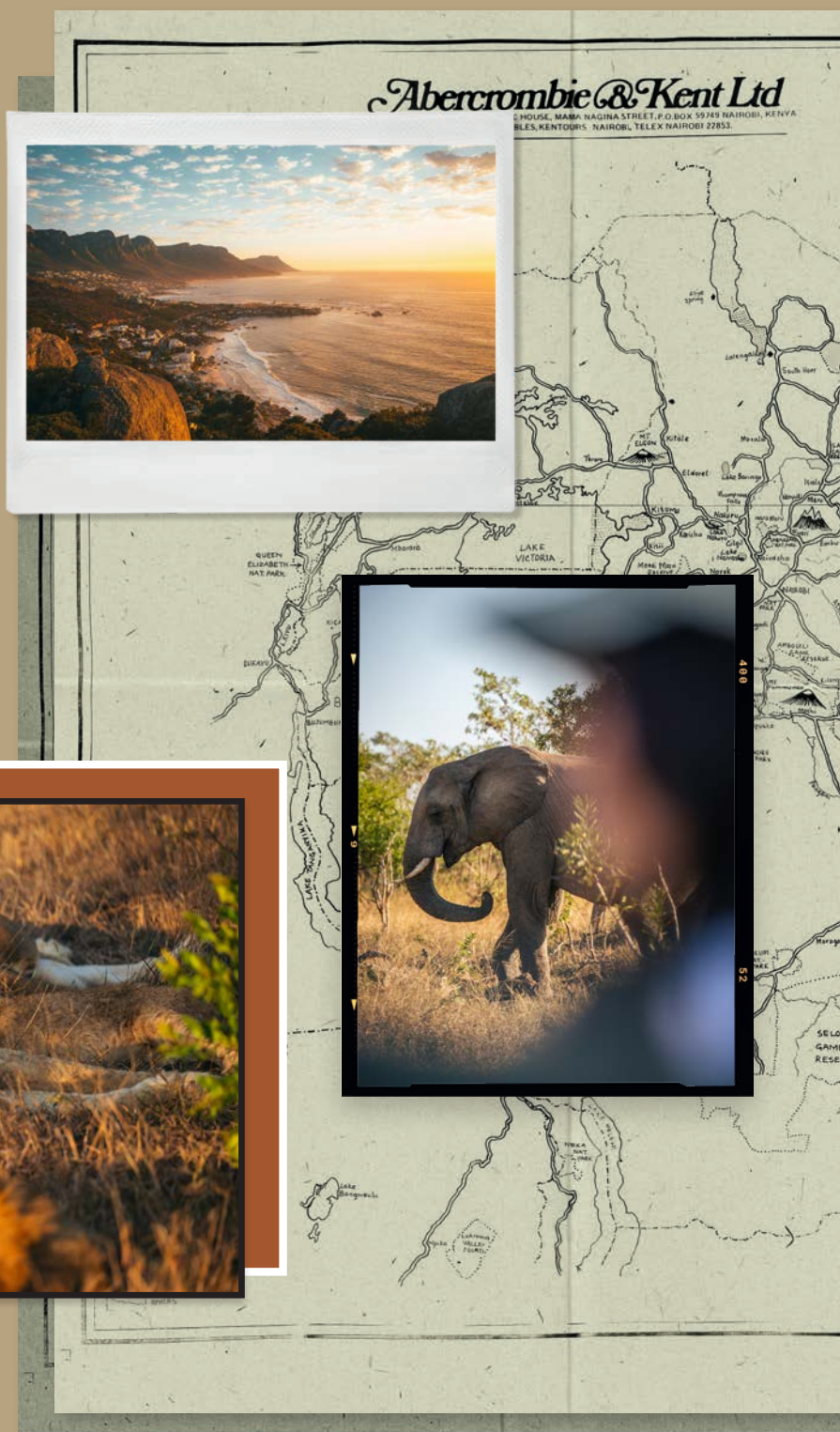
*East Africa's Great Migration*  
12 days from \$34,895 pp

*Tanzania Safari: The Serengeti and Beyond*  
11 days from \$29,995 pp

*Zambia's Spectacular National Parks*  
9 days from \$25,995 pp

*The Ultimate Zimbabwe Safari*  
12 days from \$26,495 pp

*Namibia: Epic Wilderness Adventure*  
10 days from \$25,495 pp



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\*Book your clients on an A&K Tailormade Journey to Africa for travel in 2025 by 15 May and save \$2,000 per person on bookings over \$25,000 per person. Terms & Conditions apply. Prices shown are per person, are subject to availability, and are accurate as of 27 March 2025. See website for further information.