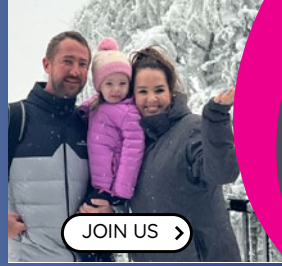


# Travel Daily

First with the news

Thursday 13th Feb 2025

MTA SARAH BROWNING



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## Connect with USA

**AGENTS** can rub shoulders with LA suppliers at the Visit USA Expos next week, beginning in Sydney on 17 Feb.

Attendees can connect with representatives from Warner Bros. Studio Tour Hollywood, LA Tourism, Magic Castle Hotel, Universal Studios Hollywood, and many more.

For details, see **page nine**.

## Escape to Fiji

**INFINITY** Holidays is giving agents the chance to win a Fiji escape when they sell Fiji product and packages between 10 Feb and 31 May.

Find out why Fiji is the ultimate go-to destination, as well as learn more about Infinity Holidays' packages to the island, by heading to **page 10**.

## Explore's parent bought

### EXPLORE!

**THE** parent company of tour operator Explore Worldwide has new owners, after Migros made the call to sell Hotelplan Group to German-based company Dertour Group for an undisclosed sum.

The new owner said it plans to "successfully develop" the different business areas of Hotelplan, which outside of Explore Worldwide, also includes brands such as Santa's Lapland and ski division Inghams.

Dertour added that nothing would change for sales partners working with all Hotelplan Group brands, and that travel agencies can expect to see the same high level of customer service and reliability for booked trips.

"All booked holidays and business trips will go ahead, while the services of all brands will

be available for booking on any date," Dertour said.

"As a part of the international Dertour Group, Hotelplan will in future have access to an extensive global network of partners, while we will benefit from Hotelplan's strategic investments in digital solutions," the company added.

The CEO of Hotelplan UK has been Australian Joe Ponte since 2020 (**TD** 07 Oct 2020), a job he took after managing the Explore Worldwide brand in Australia between 2018 and 2020.

Explore Worldwide and parent Hotelplan were both contacted for comment about any impacts in the local market. **AB**

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## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features eight pages of news including **Business Events News** plus a product profile from **Garuda Indonesia**, and full pages from:

- Los Angeles Tourism
- Infinity Holidays

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ON LOCATION

**DOHA**

Today's TD is coming to you courtesy of Qatar Airways.

**AGENTS** have arrived in Doha and are visiting the National Museum, showcasing the culture of the region.

After visiting this impressive collection, attendees will enjoy lunch at Jiwan restaurant, recently awarded the Michelin Bib Gourmand, located within the National Museum.

Also on the agenda is a visit to Souq Waqif, providing the traditional Qatar experience with markets selling gold, woven rugs, and glass ornaments.

**SCENIC° ECLIPSE**

**Ultra-Luxury Cruising**

EXPEDITION VOYAGES  
2025-2027

**Antarctica**

**Antarctica in Depth**

Buenos Aires > Buenos Aires  
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## Scenic seeing Stars



**MORE** than 300 industry representatives and agents attended Scenic Group's Night of Stars event on Sat 08 Feb at W Hotel, Sydney.

The annual event, now in its ninth year, celebrates the achievements of Scenic and Emerald Cruises & Tours' trade partners from across Australia and New Zealand.

A total of 46 Diamond Awards were given out - the most in the event's history - with Phil Hoffman Travel taking out the 'Highest Sales Multi Location Australia Wide' category.

Other winners on the night

included Jamison Travel, Bicton Travel, and Helloworld Miranda.

Hosted by TV presenter and personality David Whitehill, the evening featured performances by Karen Stokes, winner of The Voice Australia 2023.

Attendees also enjoyed a showcase of Scenic Group's portfolio, in addition to plenty of exciting updates.

"On behalf of all the management team, we congratulate all the finalists our sincere thanks to everyone who joined us for this memorable evening," said Anthony Laver, Scenic Group General Manager Sales & Marketing APAC.

"The continued growth and success of our travel partners are at the heart of our business, and we look forward to achieving even greater milestones together in 2025 and beyond." *JM*

**Pictured:** Scenic Group's Sales, Trade and Marketing team.

## Wonders of Garuda

**GARUDA** Indonesia is showcasing the many benefits it offers to travellers, including spacious seating with ample legroom and generous baggage allowance - learn more on **p11**.

**SCENIC°**  
LUXURY CRUISES & TOURS

**EMERALD°**  
CRUISES

**ARE YOU A 5 STAR PRODUCT CO-ORDINATOR?**

Scenic Group which includes Scenic & Emerald Cruises brands is looking for a Product Co-ordinator to work in the Sydney office Product Team.

- Over 4 years of work experience in the travel industry
- Strong written, oral & numeracy skills
- Good skills in MS Office programs, MS Teams, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
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- Good planning & organisational skills
- Ability to thrive in change
- Team player & willing to assist

Please click here to submit your application, including salary expectations, by 14th February 2025.

## New faces for TM

**TRAVELMANAGERS'** parent company House of Travel Australia has added two highly experienced aviation and travel professionals to its Board of Directors.

Former Virgin Australia Chief Commercial Officer Judith Crompton and recently-retired Qantas veteran Narendra Kumar will add their expertise to help the company capitalise on market growth opportunities.

Crompton and Kumar replace the company's former Chairman Barry Mayo and Founder Chris Paulsen, who both recently retired from their positions.

House of Travel Australia CEO Joe Araullo said the addition of Crompton and Kumar provide "outstanding skills and experience" which align with the Board's appetite to grow.

**SCENIC° ECLIPSE**

**Ultra-Luxury Cruising**

EXPEDITION VOYAGES  
2025-2027

**Antarctica**

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Travel Daily

## Preferred's trade play

TRAVEL agents can now access more than 600 hotels, resorts and residences worldwide via a new trade booking portal launched by Preferred Hotel Group.

The independent hotel brand has gone live with its new Travel Advisor Portal, which features a user-friendly design, supporting tools and resources.

Using the portal, travel planners can book and track reservations for their clients and check on commission payments.

Agents can also access exclusive industry room rates and special offers to elevate their client's experience after check-in.

Personalised confirmations can be generated using the platform, along with information on included guest amenities based on agency affiliation.

Preferred Travel Group Chief Revenue Officer, Cheryl Williams, said the new tool underscores the company's commitment to



supporting the agent community.

"We believe this innovative platform will streamline their workflow, making it easier to do business with us by simplifying the process of optimising all that Preferred Hotels & Resorts has to offer - and ultimately drive greater success for their businesses," Williams said.

Agents eager to broaden their knowledge about the Preferred Hotels network can also access a comprehensive training portal, featuring detailed information about the luxury network and the benefits for their clients to enrol in the I Prefer Hotel Rewards loyalty program. *ML*

## Topdeck's top deals

TOPDECK Travel is discounting select 2025-26 trips, with up to \$1,000 off 175 departures.

The tour operator's 'Delve Deep and Sail & Swim' trips, which travel to more than 20 destinations, are on special between 12 Feb and 11 Mar.

Travellers can choose from 175 departures in destinations such as Europe, Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and New Zealand.

General Manager Anna Fawcett said the latest promotion also taps into the growing trend of Gen Z travellers seeking more in-depth experiences and purposeful connections to both the destinations and the communities they visit.

"Our research shows Gen Z travellers favour zero-pressure holidays, real relationships beyond the coach and the freedom to vacay their way, whether that's a party atmosphere or a chill experience," Fawcett said.

## Wet leases up profits

AN INCREASE of 4,757 flying hours by aircraft wet leased by Qantas has helped Alliance Aviation to post a record 25% jump in revenues to \$160.1m for the first half of the financial year.

In its H1 results announcement, Alliance said Qantas has utilised all 30 wet lease aircraft options, with the company taking delivery of its last aircraft under this arrangement later this month.

For the six months to 31 Dec, the company posted a statutory profit before tax of \$41.3 million, up 9.5% on the prior period.

Total operational revenue climbed 11.3% to \$333 million, while fleet-wide flying hours also increased to 58,362 across 76 aircraft, with 97% of those hours under long-term contracts.

"This increase in flying activity has been a key driver behind the growth of our wet lease revenue, which has shown a marked improvement compared to prior years," MD Scott McMillan said.

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\*T&C's apply.



## Rex plan is great, but so are agents

**THE** Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) is calling on the Federal Government to ensure any public funds used to support Rex's ongoing operation take into account the millions of dollars still owed to travel agents.

Speaking yesterday after the announcement that the Government would purchase Rex if a suitable bidder could not be found (**TD** 12 Feb), ATIA CEO Dean Long (**pictured**) said he was supportive of the idea, but wanted to see clearer messaging around outstanding debts to travel agencies, perhaps using a clawback mechanism over a 12-month period.

"Around \$11.5 million is currently owed to Australian travel agents who are predominantly small business owners in regional and rural Australia," Long said.

"Like these agents, there are also a number of airports that



have significant losses due to the collapse of Rex, so any buyout of that debt or nationalisation of the airline must see these debts repaid as a priority.

"This can't just be about sending money to international creditors," Long implored.

Australian Airports Association (AAA) CEO Simon Westaway also weighed in on the announcement, stating there must be more information provided as to how Rex will operate under potential government ownership.

The association chief said he remained hopeful for a market-led sale, and that ongoing government assistance to help administrators achieve this outcome is welcome.

"Air connectivity is a lifeline for regional and rural Australia [and] it is essential that governments and industry work together to secure sustainable air services for the future," Westaway said.

Other industry body chiefs were even more optimistic, such as Australian Tourism Export Council Managing Director Peter Shelley, who said the contingency measures were an "important step" towards securing reliable and affordable domestic services.

"Domestic airfares can be as expensive as international flights, and uncertainty around flight availability to iconic tourism destinations makes it harder for international visitors to plan their trips," Shelley said. **AB**



### Window Seat

**WOULD** you give up your carefully selected seat on an aircraft for \$100?

Passengers on a flight from Boston to Atlanta sparked fierce debate for exchanging cash to swap seats.

One of the passengers, a senior citizen, offered their seatmate \$100 to switch seats.

The elderly passenger said the window seat made them feel claustrophobic in the particular seat alignment they were flying in.

Despite an offer to swap for free, the senior citizen insisted on them taking the money.

However, some internet users were insistent on the swap setting a bad precedent for what other fliers should be expected to do.

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## HX ready to invest

**HX'S CONSORTIUM** of new investors has completed its acquisition of the cruise line (**TD 29 Nov 2024**), with a significant new tranche of €140 million (A\$232m) of funding.

The new capital will help deliver HX's global growth strategy, and includes new expenditure to upgrade both *Fram* and *Spitsbergen*, including cabins, suites, and onboard amenities.

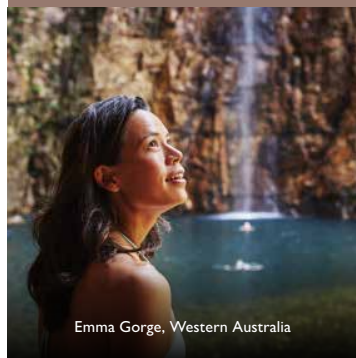
Investment by the consortium in HX is led by Arini Capital Management, Cyprus Capital Partners and Tresidor Investment Management.

The capital injection also marks the final stage of the separation of the expedition line from Hurtigruten Group - for the full details of the latest funding, see today's *Cruise Weekly*.



Inspiring Journeys

UNCOVER THE BEST KEPT *secrets* OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Emma Gorge, Western Australia

## An Entire-ly brilliant evening



**ENTIRE** Travel Group Sales & Marketing Director Greg McCallum told *Travel Daily* the feedback for the company's sold-out Travel Showcases this week has been "incredible".

## Accor goes Skywards

**EMIRATES** Skywards, the loyalty program of Emirates and flydubai, has expanded its partnership with Accor's ALL loyalty program, introducing seamless two-way conversions between the two programs.

Emirates Skywards members who are also members of ALL can now convert their Skywards Miles into ALL Reward Points, unlocking experiences across Accor's network of over 5,600 hotels.

For every 4,000 Skywards Miles, members will receive 1,000 ALL Reward Points, which can be redeemed for stays, dining experiences, or exclusive Limitless Experiences available on ALL.com.

ALL Members can also convert their points into Skywards Miles, with 4,000 ALL Reward Points equating to 2,000 Skywards Miles, which can be redeemed for a huge range of rewards, including flight tickets on Emirates and partner airlines.



The three-date roadshow in Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane is set to welcome more than 1,000 people this week, building on the success of last year's inaugural events (**TD 23 Feb**).

The roadshow offers the ability for the travel industry to get together and experience a broad spectrum of exhibitors, with more than 50 on display last night.

"We've started a really strong calendar selling season, so we figured, why not get them all together under one roof and give our travel agent partners a chance to learn more from them," McCallum said.

"There are niche suppliers and tourist boards, which the travel agents get access to... it's kind of this one-stop shop, an opportunity to come to the one event and see 50 exhibitors who are really niche and diverse, and also be educated."

The roadshow began on Tue at the Sofitel Melbourne on Collins, before heading to Sydney yesterday at The Fullerton Hotel Sydney, with the Brisbane event today at Rydges South Bank.

Attendees can also enjoy a colourful selection of food, music, and presentations, in addition to mingling with Entire's suppliers.

They will also share in a prize pool of more than \$85,000, with tickets from Air Canada, Air France, SriLankan Airlines, Philippine Airlines, and Rocky Mountaineer, along with river cruises from AmaWaterways.

ATIA Director of Membership Experience Richard Taylor is serving as the emcee for the events (**TD 24 Jan**). *MS*

## Hrdlicka still going

**VIRGIN** Australia CEO Jayne Hrdlicka has reportedly told senior managers that she still intends to leave, despite there being no firm candidate lined up to take over the role.

According to the *Australian Financial Review*, insiders at the carrier revealed Hrdlicka told her management team last Fri that she did not plan on staying at Virgin Australia.

The confirmation comes after the company publicly declared last week that its Chief Customer Officer, Paul Jones - who had been a frontrunner to succeed Hrdlicka - had withdrawn from the race (**TD 10 Feb**), leaving the airline with no clear contenders.

Hrdlicka announced her shock resignation at Virgin Australia a year ago (**TD 21 Feb 2024**).

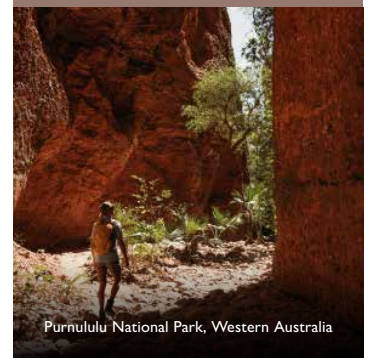


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Purnululu National Park, Western Australia



## ABEA/AIPC LAUNCH NEW TRAINING ACADEMY

**AUSTRALIA** will host its first session of the International Association of Convention Centres (AIPC) Academy later this year, equipping convention centre management with essential skills to use in their venues.

Running in Jun 2025, the first AIPC Academy in Australia will cover a range of leadership-related and convention centre management topics, featuring expert lectures and exercises to equip participants with real skills to be applied in their venues.

The announcement took place this week at a special AIPC@AIME session at the Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME), which is currently under way in Melbourne.

The AIPC Academy comes as part of a partnership between



the AIPC and Australian Business Events Association (ABEA).

ABEA Chairman Peter King said the Australian business events community will be the big winners from the AIPC partnership.

“As a former AIPC board member, I’m thrilled we can bring this outstanding management

program to the ANZ region, whilst removing a big part of the financial threshold for participation,” King said.

“It will be the first, but definitely not last, outcome of the partnership between these two great associations.”

Melbourne’s Convention and

Exhibition Centre has been tasked with hosting the inaugural event, with MCEC chief Natalie O’Brien AM saying bringing the academy to Australia will unlock new opportunities for convention centre professionals throughout the ANZ region.

“In the past, we’ve sent several of our staff to attend the AIPC Academy in Brussels, and the return on investment in emerging talent has been invaluable,” O’Brien commented.

Melbourne events management agency Revstar Group, which has a particular expertise in hotels, has been tasked with project managing the Academy - for more details, [CLICK HERE](#). *ML*

ABEA Chairman Peter King is **pictured** above at AIME with AIPC Chief Executive, Sven Bossu.

### Live music chaos

**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group’s Stage and Screen has forecasted 2025 to be “another year of music touring disasters” unless the industry plans better.

GM Adam Moon took the stage at AIME yesterday to present ‘Back from the brink: When a carefully constructed plan implodes and how to fix it’, discussing the hurdles that Australia’s live music scene continues to face, including last-minute cancellations, rising costs, unpredictable weather, and more.

### Far more events in 2025 flagged: Cvent

**MOST** event planners (81%) across Australia and NZ are planning to increase their total volume of events in 2025 by 68% compared to last year, according to research unveiled by Cvent at AIME this week.

The *Cvent Event Industry report Findings - Australia and New Zealand edition* found that organisers plan to increase their events across formats, with a projected 57% increase in face-to-face events, followed by webinars at 56%, virtual events at 54%, and hybrid events at 45%.

While the report reveals a positive market sentiment in Australia, with 77% of event professionals planning to increase spending and 100% prioritising event expenditure, it also highlights many challenges - the main one being generating more revenue.

The new Cvent research also showed a willingness by organisations to invest in event technology, with 24% prioritising technology, 17% emphasising event promotions, and 16% focusing on content speakers - see the report [HERE](#).

### HKTB connects

**HONG** Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) has partnered with 16 MICE suppliers to promote its ‘Hong Kong Incentive Playbook’ at AIME this week.

The digital guide for incentive planners features over 100 unique group experiences, divided into themes of arts & culture, wellness & nature, nightlife & parties, neighbourhoods, and Hong Kong signatures.

Highlights include pearl farming, Chinese calligraphy and World Heritage kayaking - access the guide [HERE](#).

## HONG KONG INCENTIVE PLAYBOOK

Unlock over 100 unique & immersive experiences for your groups!



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## Will AI replace agents?

### OPINION

Chad Naylor is the founder of QuoteHero app, an AI travel builder, creator of Rapibook, and the co-owner of The Cruise & Travel Store. He was formerly an AI Research Lead for the US Government.



Got an opinion? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to [feedback@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:feedback@traveldaily.com.au)

**LAST** week, OpenAI (the company behind ChatGPT) announced the limited release of a new AI product that has the potential to drastically change how people book travel.

It's called Operator, and it can autonomously use the browser to complete many of the tasks for which we traditionally rely on travel agents.

In what *Travel Daily* has described as a potentially "major threat to the viability of travel agents globally", Operator is allegedly capable of recommending itineraries, finding relevant suppliers, comparing prices and reviews, and even booking and paying for every segment of a complex itinerary.

How big is this threat, and how soon will we have to worry about it? To answer these questions, we have to consider what needs Operator will address, and what sort of customers will use AI to book their travel.

It is already possible to find and book flights, hotels, cruises, and every other type of travel segment online.

It's easy to compare options and read reviews.

AI tools can only help automate this process, making it faster and

possibly more hassle-free.

The customer who wants to book travel online is already able to do so, frequently all on one website through OTAs.

These customers tend to be tech-savvy and comfortable doing things themselves, and they may readily turn to AI to make their existing travel booking flow even more efficient.

OpenAI evidently agrees, as they've chosen to partner with major OTAs like Priceline and Booking.com on this product.

Here's what AI can't do: recount personal experiences travelling to a destination, provide opinions on the trustworthiness of suppliers (imagine the liability), and help the customer when they run into issues while travelling.

I'm aware of no developments on the horizon of AI that can replace these

"human factors".

The customers who want these things already work with travel agents, and no amount of using AI to help computers more efficiently do things they don't want will change their minds.

To paraphrase the famous maxim: "A computer can't tell you what the sunset looks like on the other side of the world."

It is tempting to picture a dark future in which people turn to faceless AI agents to do all of the travel planning that we presently pour our hearts and souls into every day.

However, the reality is that very few people who currently book with agents are going to suddenly start booking their own travel AND trusting AI to sort out the details for them.

More likely, AI marketing will expose many more people to the possibility of travel.

“  
Very few people who currently book with agents are going to suddenly start booking their own travel and trust AI to sort out the details for them  
”



**THE** Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME) last night celebrated the graduation of programs 56 and 57, and the induction of program 60.

The first TIME event of the year was held at Cover-More's office in Sydney, and was emceed enthusiastically by former graduate, Anoushka Kudav.

Speaking on the night was special guest Ponant CEO Deb Corbett, who inspired attendees with stories from her decades-long journey to the top of the Australian cruise sector.

"A true mentor doesn't just show you the way, they help you see possibilities you never considered," Corbett told attendees on the night.

"Your ability to navigate change



will define your ability to lead. "I would recommend embracing it...don't fear it, we can do this together," she enthused. *MS*

**Pictured:** Program 60 is inducted into TIME, and **inset**, Kudav and Corbett with TIME Founder Penny Spencer.

## New Explora shores

**LUXURY** cruise line Explora Journeys has released a new season of itineraries for its fleet of three ships covering the 2026-27 northern winter.

From Oct 2026 through to May 2027, the MSC brand will have ships covering the Amazon and Central America via *Explora I*, the Arabian Peninsula aboard *Explora II*, as well as a transit of the Panama Canal through to the US west coast with *Explora III*.

Highlights of the season include extended stays in Port of Spain, Cartagena and Amador.

Two of the three, *Explora I* and *Explora III*, will also meet in San Juan Bay, Puerto Rico on New Year's Eve 2026 for a dual celebration featuring a grand fireworks display, while the third ship will be in Dubai for NYE.



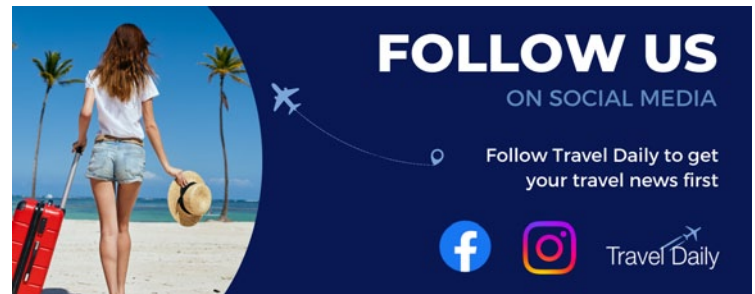
## Turkish in Tokyo

**TURKISH** Airlines has opened a lounge at Tokyo Narita International Airport, marking the airline's seventh foreign lounge.

Designed with a focus on comfort and luxury, the new venue occupies the space of the former All Nippon Airways Suites Lounge, and is open daily to all Star Alliance first and business class passengers, as well as Star Alliance Gold members.

Guests can enjoy a buffet-style selection of Turkish, Japanese, and Far Eastern cuisines, as well as relaxation areas, daybeds with apron views, and a VIP room for enhanced privacy.

The 1,500m<sup>2</sup> lounge also offers free wi-fi, flight information screens, and a dedicated workspace, in addition to shower rooms, accessible restrooms and a baby care room.



## APPOINTMENTS

Send your new appointments to:  
[appointments@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:appointments@traveldaily.com.au)

Veteran travel professional **Stephen York** has signed on with **Inspiring Vacations** as its new Trade Partnership Specialist. York's recent industry experience includes roles with Designer Journeys, Hurtigruten Group and Albatross Tours, where he served for nearly a decade.

Flight Centre Travel Group executive, **Danielle Galloway**, has joined Confederation of Australian Sport President, **Ned Coten**, on the board of **SportsLink Travel**, to help guide the organisation through further growth using their extensive knowledge and experience.

Displaying passion to help people realise their travel dreams, **Helloworld Browns Plains** in Queensland has welcomed **Simon Bell** as its newest travel expert consultant. Simon joins Kylie, Elise, and Geoff on the team.

**Norwegian Cruise Line** has, for a second time, welcomed esteemed business leader **John Chidsey** to the line's board of directors. Chidsey brings extensive experience in large-scale operations to his post, having served previously as the CEO of Subway and Burger King in the US.

The **Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME)** has welcomed **Nicole O'Sullivan** to its board of directors as its new Vic state representative. Bringing 20 years in professional coaching, leadership and training, O'Sullivan is passionate about using mentorship as an inspiration tool.

As the state steams towards the 2032 Olympic Games, the **Queensland Tourism Industry Council** has welcomed a major event specialist in **Stuart Field** to its board of directors. Field is the Managing Director of OzTix and brings 25 years' experience in ticketing and logistics.

Experienced hotel industry professional **David Fraser** has returned to **Accor**, taking on the role of Vice President Operations for the Sofitel, Sofitel Legend, MGallery and Emblems brands in the Pacific region. Fraser brings over 25 years in hotels to his role, working previously in hotel management roles with Marriott International, Starwood Hotels and Hyatt Hotels, as well as previously at Accor.

**MSC Cruises** has added PR to the remit of its Marketing Manager Australia and New Zealand, **Michelle Warren**, who says she is excited to include the division and continue building brand awareness locally.

**Gina Shaw** has joined the team at **Kaigi Conferencing and Events** as Conference and Event Manager. Shaw's most recent role was as Events Manager for a PR agency, where she collaborated with numerous organisations such as Beyond DV and Star Community Services.

Based in Hawaii, **Outrigger Hospitality Group** has appointed **Rainell Mano** as its new Area Director of Sales and Marketing, primarily for its resorts in Kauai and Kona. In her new role, Mano will be responsible for maximising market share, revenue and occupancy growth.

## Newcastle an eco champion

**NEWCASTLE** Airport has become the first aviation hub in Australia to achieve the Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) Level 4+ Transition, putting it among the top 12% of airports in the world when it comes to reducing its environmental footprint.

Run by Airports Council International (ACI), the ACA is the only globally recognised program for airports committed to managing and slashing their carbon emissions.

"Level 4+ recognises that we are truly transitioning away from carbon reliance and embedding sustainability into our long-term future," said Interim Chief Executive, Andrew Warrender.

"It shows we're not just paying lip service; we're serious about making real, lasting changes that align with the Australian Government's goal of net-zero emissions by 2050."

The green milestone follows years of hard work and dedication, which involved the hub achieving net zero scope 1 and 2 emissions last year - six years ahead of schedule.



The NSW airport also partnered with an Aussie renewable energy retailer to run entirely on clean energy; invested in local native bushland regeneration projects to offset remaining emissions; supported the uptake of electric vehicles by installing EV charging bays for passengers; and more.

Newcastle Airport said it will continue working towards net zero emissions by 2050, while supporting local and global efforts in renewable innovation. *JM*

## Bali's new visa guide

**IMMIGRATION** Indonesia has published a guide for prospective visitors to ensure visa applications completed online are not denied due to avoidable mistakes.

The '101 Visa Application Tips' guide includes tips, such as ensuring visitors are using the official Indonesia e-visa website and not an unofficial knock-off.

Visa officials cited incomplete and incorrect documents as a key reason for rejection, along with errors in name spelling and passport detail inconsistencies.

Another top reason for rejection is a bad travel history, with officials looking at an applicant's history of violations such as overstaying or deportation.

Visitors can apply for their Indonesian eVisa up to 90 days before their arrival in the country.

## Kimpton Mardi Gras

**ACTIVATIONS** including an 'Out at Margot's bottomless drag brunch' will take place at Kimpton Margot Sydney as part of celebrations for the 2025 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.

Two events will be hosted by RuPaul's Drag Race Down Under contestant 'Hollywood Star' and take place at Luke's Kitchen on 15 Feb and 01 Mar.

The IHG brand hotel has signed on as an official partner of the festival and will host the events.

### EDITORIAL

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**Cruise Editor** - Myles Stedman  
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# COME AND MEET LA SUPPLIERS AT THE VISIT USA EXPOS

Sydney  
17 February

Brisbane  
18 February

Melbourne  
20 February

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**Jasmine Vipani,**  
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- Central location with easy access to various neighborhoods in LA.
- 12+ dining and entertainment options on-site that highlight the neighborhood's diverse cultures and cuisines.

Visit Jasmine to learn more about features like the world's 1st hydraulic wrestling ring and ceiling harp at a hotel!

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**Helen Albrecht, Sales Manager**

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- Go behind the scenes of a real working movie studio!

Visit Helen to uncover behind-the-scenes secrets from your favorite TV shows and movies!



## UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

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International Sales

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- Universal Studios Hollywood is open 365 days a year!

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## MARINA DEL REY HOTEL

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Group Sales Manager

- We are close to LAX!
- All balcony hotel with marina views.

Visit Samantha for a special group offer from Marina del Rey Hotel.

## MARINA DEL REY TOURISM BOARD

**Stephanie Nakasone,**  
Global Business Development  
Executive

- LA's Marina - Waterfront hotels and restaurants!
- Minutes from LAX!

Discover why Marina del Rey is LA's premier waterfront escape!



## CITADEL OUTLETS

**Cynthia Schmitt-Easey,**  
Director, International Sales  
& Marketing



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- Find your LA Style with Outlet Savings at Citadel Outlets.

Visit Cyn with Citadel Outlets to learn more about commissionable shopping packages.

## KARMEL CONNECT

**Mike Afram, President**



- Offers a one-stop shop for all your transfers and tours!
- Servicing all Los Angeles area airports, hotels, attractions and points of interest!

Visit Mike with Karmel Shuttle for all your Southern California transportation and tour needs!

## LA TOURISM

Visit Crystal & Martina at the LA Tourism booth for ready-to-use LA itineraries, and to find out how you can **WIN \$100!**



## MAGIC CASTLE HOTEL

**Darren Ross, Chief Executive Officer**

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- Access to the Private Club... Magic Castle!

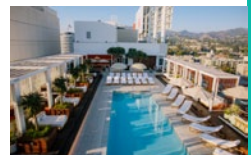
Los Angeles is open for business! Come see Darren for the latest updates.

## W HOLLYWOOD

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- Fully renovated property, transforming the hotel.
- Luxury in the epicenter of LA, and the heart of Hollywood.

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- Airport transfers

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Book now

### DENARAU

## Softel Fiji

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- Half Day Malamala Beach Club
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Book now

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## Royal Davui Island Resort

5 Nights

#### PACKAGE INCLUDES:

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- Airport transfers
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FROM **\$5,499** pp twin share\*

Book now

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## Plantation Island Resort

7 Nights

#### PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- 7-nights Plantation Island Resort
- Airport transfers

#### Package Special Offers

7 NIGHTS

'Stay 7 pay 5' from

**\$1,519** pp twin share\*

Travel Dates:  
14/08–19/09/25, 13/10–16/11/25,  
15/12–23/12/25; Book by 23/03/25

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'Stay 5 pay 4' from

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Travel Dates:  
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26/07–19/09/25, 13/10–16/11/25,  
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HELIO CODES: AU50101

FROM **\$2,299** pp twin share\*

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\*Price per person based on twin share. Subject to availability. 'From' prices can change without notice and maybe removed at any time. Special offers, including Green Star offers, are subject to availability, block out dates apply and can be removed without notice and are valid for selected rate plans only in Helio – and check 'Details' tab to ensure offers are included. Refer to Helio for availability and commission levels. Rates are dynamic and subject to change, removal without notice, and subject to availability. Alternative product may be offered if the featured product is unavailable. Prize will be awarded to the top selling agent of all Fiji bookings made through Infinity Holidays between 10 February & 31 May 2025 with money on file, and paid in full before 31 May 2025.





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