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Travel Daily First with the news

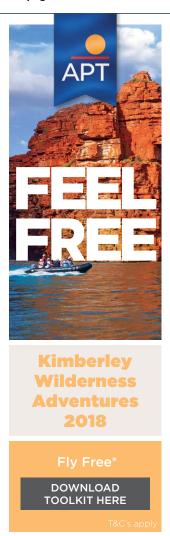
www.traveldaily.com.au Tuesday 23rd January 2018

CLIA recruitment

CLIA has launched a recruitment drive as it looks to grow its member base in 2018.

The cruise body allows agents the ability to access a number of educational offerings and discounts to Cruise360.

See page 9 for further details.



ACCC pries Mantra sale

THE Australian competition watchdog has delayed a decision on the planned acquisition of Mantra Group Ltd by AccorHotels (TD 12 Oct), calling for additional information from the Frenchbased hotelier as it investigates the potential merger.

The deal between AccorHotels and Mantra would see the hotelier's portfolio of short term accommodation top more than 325 hotels in Australia, spanning brands including Sofitel, Pullman, Novotel, Mercure and ibis (under Accor) and Peppers, Mantra and BreakFree (managed by Mantra). Submissions from interested

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news and photos, including a front cover page for **United** plus full pages from:

- inPlace Recruitment
- CLIA

parties needed to be received by 17 Nov, but the Australian **Competition and Consumer** Commission has said it is pushing back its initial provision decision date of 01 Feb, "pending receipt of further information from Accor."

The investigation centres on the potential impact of the proposed acquisition on competition among short-term accom.

Specifically, it wants feedback on whether AccorHotels' accommodation offering competes closely with Mantra's, and what impact the buy-out would have on the "price and quality of accommodation offerings", the regular said.

Similarly, the ACCC is prying the same concerns in relation to the property management & service and franchise offerings of the acquisition.

A revised proposed decision date will be revealed in due course, the ACCC confirmed.

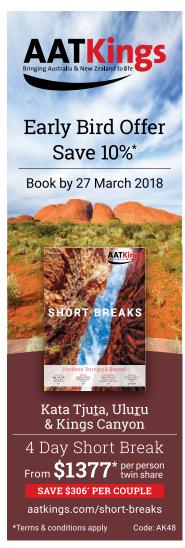


United connections

UNITED Airlines is pushing the number of one-stop connections available to Sydneysiders as part of its new daily service between Sydney and Houston, Texas.

The route offers flights to over 70 destinations from IAH.

See the **cover wrap** for more.





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European River Cruising Preview 2019 Out Now!



Brochure in store

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AFTA fires up public vote

AFTA is gearing up for its third People's Choice campaign as part of this year's National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA), aiming to build on the 8,000 public votes lodged in 2017.

The 2018 People's Choice: Retail Travel Agency of the Year initiative is aimed directly at promoting bricks and mortar suburban ATAS travel agencies, AFTA says, and will officially launch on Mon.

AFTA chief executive Jayson

\$999 to London

GARUDA Indonesia is offering Economy class fares from Sydney, Melbourne and Perth to London Heathrow from \$999 return under its latest promotion.

The carrier is also offering Business class flights from \$4,440 return, or the option of upgrading to First class on the Jakarta to London leg for a total of \$7,520.

The Economy fares are on sale to 31 Mar for travel to 06 Dec.

Business fares and the mixed Business/First offer are on sale to 28 Feb for travel to 31 Jul. Westbury said it was hoped this year would attract greater involvement from networks and independent ATAS travel agencies to maximise consumer engagement, and that invaluable market insights would be gained.

"We surveyed all 8,000 consumers that voted (last year) and learned that 49% of travellers believe that a travel agent provides the best advice when choosing a holiday destination," Westbury said.

"This scored higher than the influence of TripAdvisor, a movie, a book or a magazine, a 'great deal I found online' and even 'something I saw on social media'."

The People's Choice voting process will be promoted through *International Traveller* and *Australian Traveller* magazines and their websites, which receive 1.5 million visits per annum.

Those who vote go into the draw to win a Mekong river cruise from award sponsor APT.

Voting runs 29 Jan to 31 May and the winner will be named at the NTIAs on 21 Jul - CLICK HERE for more details.



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Scoot targets family market

NO-FRILLS carrier Scoot is encouraging families on a budget not to put off holidays abroad, challenging parents to take their kids to exotic destinations to create "a lifetime of memories around the world together".



The 2018 campaign is focused on destinations such as India, which can be accessed from Perth, via Singapore, currently priced from \$199 one-way.

"This means the culture and exotic flavours and sounds of countries such as India are really within reach, budget-wise," the Singapore Airlines' offshoot said.

Other locations targeted as part of Scoot's 2018 family marketing push include Greece, Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam, Germany and the Philippines.

A video highlighting the travel experiences of the Lucas family from Melbourne (who travelled to India) is being used by Scoot to create awareness.

View the clip by **CLICKING HERE**.

Travelport milestone

TRAVELPORT'S Rich Content and Branding merchandising tool is now being used by over 250 airlines around the world, the technology firm has announced.

The tool provides agents with a graphically rich experience when searching for and booking branded fares and ancillaries.

New NZ HLO shops

HELLOWORLD New Zealand has expanded its reach with the addition of helloworld Millwater in Auckland and helloworld Whitianga, taking the group's network in NZ to almost 70 outlets, including satellite stores.

Virgin Australia Industry Rates ex Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane to Hong Kong.

Sales until further notice.
Business Class from \$2,900*
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Taxes approx. \$150* - \$200* pp

*Conditions Apply.



INDUSTRY DEALS



For more details visit www.travelclub.com.au

Kings' NZ brochure

AAT Kings has rolled out its 2018/19 New Zealand program, consisting of 27 trips including a new Inspiring Journeys itinerary of North and South islands.

The Inspiring New Zealand tour explores Auckland, Rotorua, Wellington and Queenstown over 10 days, and is priced from \$7,025 per person twin share.

AAT Kings' Guided Holidays program of NZ features 16 trips, with the option of First Choice (more inclusions) and Best Buys (providing value and comfort).

View the brochure **HERE**.

WRD Coco reps

WORLD Resorts of Distinction has added the Coco Collection in the Maldives into its portfolio.

The properties include Coco Prive Private Island, Coco Bodu Hithi and Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu.

WRD will operate as Coco's sales & marketing representatives in the Australian market.



Window Seat

NO ONE likes getting ripped off on their holidays, but a group of Japanese students were fuming when they got charged €1,145 (AU\$1,751) for three steaks in Venice, Italy.

The trio said they ordered a modest meal of three steaks, fried fish and water.

Venice Today reports that past guests to the Osteria da Luca had been charged €8 euros per 100 grams of seafood.

To top it off, it may not be the first time on their eventful trip the trio got slugged while on their Venetian vacation.

Local media reports that the group also got stung €350 (\$535) for three bowls of pasta.

So next time you go to Venice be careful, or as the Italians say, stai attento.







MTA agent's Paris recon

MTA - Mobile Travel Agents are always across the globe and consultant Kyara Newport was recently in Paris as part of a French study tour program.

Staying at the Hotel De Crillon, Newport was treated like a queen with an apartmentsized room,

fresh daily flowers, a personal butler and a souffle cooked table-side in the hotel's awarding winning L'Ecrin Restaurant.

Pictured at the Hotel De Crillon in Paris is Mobile Travel Agents' Kyara Newport with Rosewood Hotel snr sales mgr Naoya Sato.



Kramer to Viking

ERIN Kramer has jumped ship to Viking Cruises as the line's new trade marketing manager based in Sydney.

Kramer was previously at Scenic as a trade marketing manager on a contract basis for six months.

New Club Med agent tools

CLUB Med has made a number of changes to improve its pre-existing brochure and tools following feedback from Australian and NZ agents.

The Club Med Travel Agent portal will now offer extra resources, sales tools and rewards to assist consultants.

To tie in with this, the all-inclusive chain has released new brochures to take advantage of the peak booking period for the 2018/19 season.

The collection will now feature more detail on the all-inclusive

Contiki US fly free

CONTIKI has launched its latest fly free offer to the United States and Canada.

The fly free deal is valid on Contiki's 55-day Epic Adventure and 25-day The Big West tours.

The promotion is part of a three piece air deal, which also allows travellers to fly return for \$599 or \$899 on select itineraries.

Contiki is also offering a 10% early payment discount on select 2018 trips booked prior to 14 Mar.

Valid until 28 Feb, the offers are with Contiki's preferred airline partners Virgin Australia and Delta Air Lines.

CLICK HERE for more.

package, family services and experiences in each resort, plus the addition of new resorts.

The brochure also includes updated maps and grids for easy resort comparison, as well as highlighting must-try experiences in each resort and region.

Club Med Australia & NZ gm Madeleine Clow said the role of travel agents was more important than ever before.

"We look forward to continuing our strong relationship with agents in both Australia and New Zealand, in rewarding with incentives and providing the tools for easier sales," Clow said.

Club Med will commence its earlybirds specials on 31 Jan, which will offer discounts of up to 30%.

NTL/ADL non-stop

FLYPELICAN is introducing direct non-stop services between Newcastle and Adelaide, with flights to commence in Mar.

The two-hour trip will operate three times a week from Newcastle on Tue, Wed and Fri.

FlyPelican will use Fokker jet aircraft seating 80 or 100 pax.

The regional carrier said it was open to adding more flights if the demand was strong.



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787-10 certified

BOEING'S 787-10 Dreamliner aircraft has been cleared for commercial services after gaining certification from the US Federal Aviation Administration.

Other aviation regulatory nods are expected to follow the FAA's lead and certify the 787-10 prior to its entering service.

The -10 has a range of 11,910km and seats around 330 passengers in a two-class configuration, 40 more seats than the 787-9.

Bendigo glamping

BALGOWNIE Estate Bendigo in Victoria has created a new style of accommodation for guests, adding 15 luxury glamping tents.

The permanent structures will be dotted around the winery grounds of Balgownie Estate, providing "stunning views of the vineyard & countryside Victoria".

Glamping tents will be available from 01 Feb, with prices starting at \$205 per night.

FX mobile kiosks

FOREIGN exchange (FX) firm Travelex has unveiled new "On the Move" mobile kiosks at Perth Airport, aimed at giving departing passengers a chance to obtain currency closer to international departure gates.

It's been dubbed as a "world first" FX service by Travelex.

"As the global leader in foreign exchange, Travelex is committed to challenging the status quo and innovating ways to make the essential process of currency exchange easier & more convenient," md Dion Jensen said.

HA/JAL codeshare

HAWAIIAN Airlines and Japan Airlines have applied to the US Govt seeking approval to launch codeshare operations between Japan and Hawaii and on flights within the Hawaiian islands.

The carriers plan to commence the codeshare deal on 25 Mar.

US Consul turns it on for United



CONSUL General of the USA Valerie Fowler opened the doors to her Sydney residence last night, playing host to guests of United Airlines.

The celebration marked the airline's first non-stop flights from Houston to Sydney, with the inaugural flight UA101 landing on Sat (TD yesterday).

According to Fowler, the nonstop service will get passengers to New York faster than any other way, and will open up 70 new one-stop destinations for travellers coming out of Sydney.

"This is a really exciting thing for anyone interested in the USA and Australia relations, whether it's for business, tourism, leisure

travel or students - it's a win altogether," said Fowler.

The new service is expected to attract 27,000 new visitors to Sydney, equating to a \$50m injection into the local economy.

Among the UA staff from Chicago and Sydney at last night's event were corporate partners from the States, TMC's, travel agency representatives, government delegates and media.

UA vp worldwide sales Dave Hilfmen praised those involved in securing and welcoming the inaugural flight to Sydney Airport.

Pictured is Dave Hilfmen; Valerie Fowler; Julie Reid, UA director of AUS/NZ and Geoff Culbert, Sydney Airport's new ceo.





Bhutan extends friendship



THE tiny kingdom of Bhutan is aiming to double its Australian arrivals this year as it marks a landmark anniversary in relations between the two countries.

Having waived fees and introduced discounts of up to 50% for Australian travellers (*TD* 28 Nov), the Himalayan country is this year celebrating 15 years of diplomatic ties with Canberra.

At a roadshow for about 80 travel agents in Sydney last night, Bhutan's Minister for Economic Affairs Lyonpo Lekey Dorji said the initiative recognised the role Australia had played in assisting the country's emergence as an open democracy.

"This is a small token of our appreciation for what the people of Australia have done." he said.

Under the Bhutan-Australia Friendship Offer, all Australian nationals visiting Bhutan between Jun and Aug this year can opt not to pay the mandatory minimum daily package rate of US\$200pppn, and instead pay only the Sustainable Development Fee of US\$65pppn.

Australians can also receive airfare discounts of up to 30% and hotel savings of up to 50%.

Having welcomed 2,200 Australians last year, Bhutan hopes the anniversary initiative will result in a 100% increase in visitors during 2018.

Dorji said the demographics of Australian visitors had been diversifying recently as the country attracted younger visitors and those looking for luxury and cultural authenticity.

Pictured at last night's event are Bhutan Minister for Economic Affairs Lyonpo Lekey Dorji, the country's Consul General to Australia Catherine Harris, Tourism Council of Bhutan director Chhimmy Pem, and Bhutan Dept of Bilateral Affairs director general Kesang Wangdi.



AFTA update

From AFTA's chief executive, Jayson Westbury

A VERY happy new year to all the loyal *Travel Daily* readers as Australia well and truly returns to work after a long hot summer. This past holiday season has fortunately been one without any significant global incidents or drama and for the travel industry this has been welcomed. Last year definitely presented us all with many dreadful incidents and I guess all we can do

is hope that 2018 is not a repeat of any of that. Sadly, the world remains on alert for something to happen somewhere and it does seem that these days we have all become more prepared to deal with incidents when they occur.

On a brighter note, I expect 2018 to be a good year for the travel industry. The Australian economy is bubbling along well and apart from crazy global impacts, the forecast appears to be for a stable 12 months. That all should mean that people travel both for business and pleasure and this should bring with it good results for all in the industry.

For AFTA, we will be bedding down the new AFTA Chargeback Scheme (ACS) as more and more members join on to the program to get the protection they need against credit card chargebacks. In addition to this, AFTA will be getting out and about more and more as we bring on a business development executive in the second quarter of this year. This will enable AFTA to be on the road visiting with members, talking about all the terrific products and services AFTA has to offer, along with explaining the new ACS scheme to new members who choose to join.

All this with the normal colour and movement of talking with our friends in Canberra in the lead up to the next Federal Election. Not sure exactly when that will be, but both sides are already talking about policies and developing ideas that we hope will bring benefits to the travel and tourism industry across the country.

So as my first column for the year, hello to all and I look forward to another action packed year for the travel industry throughout 2018.

Raman on tour

ABERCROMBIE & Kent's regional md for Australia/Asia-Pacific Sujata Raman will host a small group tour through Egypt from 08-20 Sep.

The trip travels from Cairo to Luxor, Aswan and Alexandria, including a Nile cruise, priced from \$9,995ppts.

Etihad OTP record

ETIHAD Airways has recorded its best operational on-time performance since 2009, with 82% of departures and 86% of arrivals coming within 15 minutes of schedule during 2017.

Scenic '19 preview

SCENIC is offering a price freeze and included flights as part of its newly released 2019 river cruise preview program.

Travellers can book 2019 cruises at 2018 prices across all departures, and take advantage of included flights to Europe when booking a Standard Suite on a cruise of 11 days or more.

Flights to Europe are available for \$995 per person including taxes when booking a Balcony Suite on a cruise of 11 days or more departing Apr-Sep.

Launching in 2019 will be an eight-day Highlights of Normandy and the Seine itinerary.



Travel Daily

Tuesday 23rd January 2018

Solo trvlr not alone

THE tourism industry fails "to cater for the needs of the growing solo traveller market," savs Liz Young, managing director at Individual Traveller.

Young made the comments in concurrence with a recent call from Lonely Planet for the industry to do more to combat the financial disadvantages solo travellers face such as an average of 20% more on insurance and 50% more on accommodation.

"Operator-beneficial packages have been the cornerstone of the tourism industry for too long...allowing the possibility of discriminatory practices to flourish," Young said.

Dodgy visa services

NSW Minister for Better Regulation Matt Kean has warned consumers seeking Temporary Work Visas (subclass 457) to avoid dealings with North Sydneybased migration agency Goldman Pintex Management following 11 complaints of malpractice since Sep 2016.

The caution also extends to dealings with the company's sole director and shareholder, Yoon Seok "Joseph" Choi.

Work visa applications are exchanged "for a hefty fee of up to \$60,000" and "in a number of cases...the trader failed to refund instalments already paid," Minister Kean said.



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Aus Open lures travel trade



SHARP-EYED viewers of the Australian Open tennis on TV last Fri night would have noticed repeated shots of Webjet's Dave Galt and Dennis Alysandratos of Consolidated Travel in the crowd.

The pair were highlighted because they were sitting next to Nick Kyrgios' father in the player's box during the 17th seed's third round winning match against his idol, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

Gemini conversion

STAR Cruises has revealed that it will be converting its SuperStar Gemini into a floating hotel from 07-16 Feb at Sanya Phoenix Island International Port in China.

The cruise company made the move to take advantage of Chinese New Year festivities with pax on board able to enjoy a new festive program including the Candlelight Valentine's Day Dinner at Sea and Lunar New Year Reunion Dinner at Sea.

Packages are inclusive of daily buffet breakfast for two.

North Australia Tourism Inf fund

LABOR leader Bill Shorten has unveiled plans to form a local advisory panel for a proposed \$1 billion Northern Australia Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

The group will be comprised of community and business leaders, tourism operators and experts from major regional tourism centres who will work towards forming a list of key projects that Labor can action if they win the next federal election.

Such projects will likely include regional airport capacity, cruise ship infrastructure, attracting int'l tourists and airlines to regional centres and new attractions.

"It will be established in the next few months so that it can start providing advice and recommendations to Labor this year," Bill Shorten said.

Hyatt Centric Ginza

HYATT Hotels has opened the Hyatt Centric Ginza Tokyo in Japan, the first property to open for the Centric brand in the Asia-Pacific region.

The 164-room hotel merges modern and traditional designs and features a signature restaurant called Namiki66 and city skyline views.

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Other benefits of CLIA membership include:

- Exclusive use of the CLIA logo on all your marketing material
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- Member only access to CLIA's Global "Plan A Cruise Month" campaign
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