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Holidays of Australia & the World

New Fiji country manager

SOUTH Pacific marketing veteran Rob Thompson has been appointed as the new Sydney-based Regional Manager for Tourism Fiji Australia.

He joins Tourism Fiji with extensive industry experience, having looked after the Aus, NZ and Indian markets for Tahiti Tourisme for the last 17 years.

Thompson steps into the position vacated by the organisation's former country manager for Australia Hal Caldwell, who left Tourism Fiji in Jul this year.

Tourism Fiji CEO Matt Stoeckel said the appointment was "an exciting development in Tourism Fiji's Australian market operations.

"We are thrilled to welcome Rob into the team, he has an incredible understanding of the

Australian market, as well as the Pacific Islands, and will bring with him the knowledge required to lead the team in our single largest source market for Fiji".

Thompson, who commenced his new role yesterday, is returning to his roots, having been born in Fiji, and said "the opportunity to join the Tourism Fiji Australian team and promote my home country to Aussies was too good an opportunity to miss".

Tourism Fiji has also appointed Tom Svensen as its new partnership manager for New Zealand, based in Auckland.

Svensen joins the organisation after seven years with Intrepid.

RCI seeks seekers

ROYAL Caribbean International is showcasing the unique features of its South Pacific fleet, such as a 12m-long surf simulator, on-board eateries including Jamie's Italian, skydiving simulators and even dodgem cars in the Seaplex.

Local vessels this year include *Ovation*, *Voyager* and *Radiance of the Seas* - for more see the cover page of today's *Travel Daily*.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has eight pages of news, a front cover page for **Celebrity Cruises**, an MTA photo page plus full pages:

- TMS Talent
- Entire Travel Group
- Tripfuser product profile pg

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Travel Daily

Tuesday 10th December 2019



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A Friend in hand

EVOLUTION Travel Collective has appointed former Flight Centre executive Michael Friend to the role of Business Consultant, where he will help the company to map out its future growth plans. Friend is on a six-month term.



White Island tourist tragedy

FIVE tourists have been killed and 11 are still missing after a volcano erupted on New Zealand's White Island in the Bay of Plenty yesterday.

Australians are believed to be among the victims, with many exploring the island at the time of the eruption as part of a land excursion during an *Ovation of the Seas* Royal Caribbean cruise.

The cruise line released a statement today expressing their shock and sadness at the news.

"The news from White Island is devastating, the details that are emerging are heartbreaking," Royal Caribbean said.

"We are communicating with our guests and their families and we're making sure they are taken care of in terms of medical help, counselling, accommodation, and transport".

Media reports on the ground suggest 24 Australians were on the island at the time of tragedy,

with three of the five confirmed dead believed to be Australian.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison conveyed his sorrow at a press conference this morning.

"This is a very, very hard day for many families whose loved ones have been caught up in this terrible tragedy - I fear there is worse to come," he said.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) has also expressed its sympathy for the tourists caught up in the disaster.

"We express our sincere condolences to those who have lost loved ones and our thoughts are with those who have suffered injuries," a CLIA spokesperson said today.

Ovation of the Seas remains docked in Tauranga today until further notice.

Family members concerned about relatives aboard *Ovation of the Seas* can call 1300 026 240 in Australia & 0800 002 141 in NZ.

Tripfuser Sri Lanka

AGENTS now have the ability to customise trips to Sri Lanka, with online travel marketplace Tripfuser highlighting the range of different activities that are available through its local suppliers and Travel Concierge team.

See more on **page 11**.

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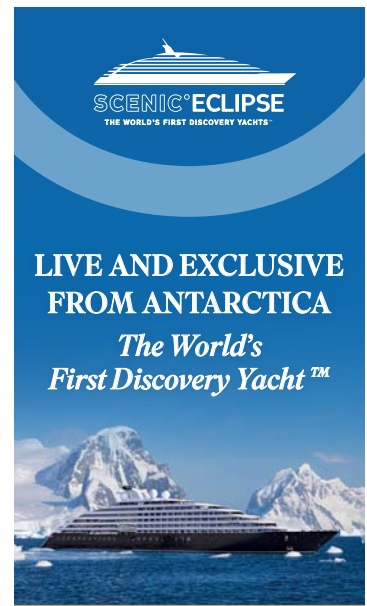
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Chilean eVisa system delayed

AUSTRALIAN travel agents with clients travelling to Chile have been given some certainty about their customers' travel documents over the coming months, after the Chilean government decided to postpone the introduction of a new electronic visa platform.

Originally set to be introduced in just a week's time, on 17 Dec, the system's launch has now been officially delayed until May 2020, according to Eclipse Travel Director, Matt McMillan.

A trial had been planned to run until Mar 2020, at which point the new eVisa was set to replace the current US\$117 "reciprocity" fee payable upon arrival at Santiago International Airport.

McMillan thanked Chilean officials for deciding to postpone the introduction of the new system during the current busy travel season for the Australian market.

"We have many clients currently travelling to and within South America so this makes our job a little easier," he said.

"This announcement means agents can reassure clients that the current system will remain in place for the foreseeable future."

McMillan said Eclipse Travel was working with the Chilean authorities to ensure agents are able to access information on the new system as soon as it becomes available - more details on 1300 575 752.

QF Group hours

QANTAS Group Travel is today working to revised hours, open for email enquiries only between 1.30pm and 5.30pm AEDT.

To get in touch outside of these hours, agents can visit the website or contact QF Reservations, with hours returning to normal from 11 Dec.



BlazeAid named as Traveleague Charity

TOMORROW'S massive Christmas Traveleague luncheon at Melbourne's Crown Palladium Ballroom will raise money for BlazeAid, a volunteer-based organisation, which works with families and individuals in rural Australia after natural disasters such as fire and floods.

Working alongside rural families, the volunteers work to rebuild fences and other structures that have been damaged or destroyed - also helping to lift the spirits of people who are sometimes facing their second or third flood event after years of drought, or devastating bushfire losses.

Traveleague Gold sponsors this year include AirLink Services Group, Gow-Gates Insurance Brokers, MTA Travel, Entire Travel Group, Philippine Airlines, Rail Europe, TMS Talent, & Scenic, with Los Angeles' Magic Castle Hotel once again a major sponsor.



Window Seat

THE madness of America's "emotional support animal" culture has reached new heights after an Arizona man formally registered a beehive as his support creature.

Airlines are already concerned about the proliferation of the practice, because they are currently obliged by federal regulations to carry emotional support animals in plane cabins.

David Keller - who has actually never owned any bees - said he is taking a stand against the ridiculous practice, by getting an official certificate at USAServiceDogRegistration.com.

He fortunately has no plans to take the beehive on a flight - otherwise the airline and other passengers are very likely to tell him to buzz off.

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Maui eat now please?



GUESTS aboard Norwegian Cruise Line's 2019 Legends family enjoyed exploring some of Maui's highlights yesterday, paying a visit to Maui Ocean Centre - the Aquarium of Hawaii, and Ali'i Kula Lavender Farm, in between some spectacular meals at Kula Lodge in Kula, and Fleetwood's on Front Street in Lahania, owned by British musician and island resident Mick Fleetwood.

Following their day hosted by the Hawaii Tourism Oceania and the Maui Visitors Bureau, the ship undertaking the cruise, *Pride of America*, spent the night in Kahului Harbour, ready to depart this afternoon for Hilo on the Island of Hawaii.

Pictured: The group tucked into some delicious burgers at the idyllic Kula Lodge, located in Upcountry Maui.

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Bondi to Manly open

A NEW 80km walking trail between Sydney's iconic Bondi and Manly beaches was officially opened on Sun.

NSW Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney Minister Stuart Ayres said the newly launched Bondi to Manly Walk would open up the Harbour and foreshore to foster the people of Sydney and its visitors.

Curiosity Brisbane

BRISBANE'S 17-day innovation, science, technology and arts festival, Curiosity Brisbane, is set to inject \$17 million into the Queensland economy in 2020.

Innovation and Tourism Minister Kate Jones said cultural tourism was booming globally, and Curiosity Brisbane would boost the state's reputation as a centre for the arts and culture.

The 2020 edition of the festival will take place between 20 Mar and 05 Apr.

Princess welcomes

PRINCESS Cruises recently christened its first MedallionClass ship, *Sky Princess* at a ceremony in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

As the most technologically advanced vessel in the line's fleet, Princess Cruises chose the theme 'Reach for the Sky' for the occasion, honouring the women of the US Space Program by naming Captain Kay Hire and Apollo 13 engineer Poppy Northcutt as godmothers.

Solomons webinar

TOURISM Solomon is offering agents the chance to win a \$50 pre-paid Visa card by taking part in a Solomon Islands update webinar next Tue (17 Dec) at 10am NSW/Vic.

The webinar will run for approximately 30 minutes and include a Q&A session.

CLICK HERE to register for the webinar, or email **HERE** for more information.

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- 6 Husky experience
- 7 Reindeer experience
- 8 Santa Claus Village visit
- 9 Siida museum in Inari
- 10 Multiple opportunities for Northern Lights viewing



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Tourism haze cost

GLOBAL media coverage of the ongoing bushfire crisis is likely to have a long lasting effect on tourism, University of Technology Sydney Senior Lecturer in Tourism David Beirman warns.

"The images of a cruise ship arriving or departing in Sydney harbour with a smoke-filled sky is not a good look... and it flies in the face of the promoted marketing of a sparkling Sydney Harbour," he told the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

A number of attractions including Sydney's BridgeClimb and TreeTops Adventure Park on the Central Coast, are also facing disruption because of the smoke.

However, NSW Tourism Minister Stuart Ayres has said he did not expect the fires to have a long-term impact on tourism.

Mercure open for biz

ACCOR Hotels has revealed that bookings are now open for its upcoming Mercure Canberra Belconnen property.

The five-storey, 125-room hotel is scheduled to open in mid Jan and features a range of amenities including relaxed workstations, Smart TVs, complimentary wi-fi, gym facilities, food & beverage outlets, and large event and conference spaces.

"We're delighted to bring the Mercure brand to Belconnen in partnership with Canberra Labor Club," said Accor Pacific's Chief Operating Officer Simon McGrath.

The hotel will be located at Cameron Avenue Belconnen - [CLICK HERE](#) for bookings.

Boeing's faulty fine

THE Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has revealed it plans to impose a US\$3.9 million penalty fine on Boeing, after the company failed to stop the installation of faulty parts on more than 100 of its jets.

The FAA said Boeing "failed to adequately oversee its suppliers to ensure they complied with the company's quality assurance system", and that it submitted aircraft for final FAA airworthiness certification after determining that the parts could not be used due to a failed strength test.



MAXINE Barron from FBI Travel in Melbourne has won *Travel Daily's* competition run in conjunction with KLM Royal Dutch Airlines to celebrate the carrier's 100th birthday.

KLM's Victorian Account Manager George Siljanoski surprised Barron this morning at the FBI office, presenting her with

the coveted prize of two Economy tickets to Amsterdam and a special KLM 100 model plane.

To win, she had to submit the correct answer to all of *TD's* weekly questions and have the most creative photo/video wishing KLM a happy 100th birthday.

Barron sent in a very creative video showcasing jubilant KLM dancing mascot to who bopped away to the tune of *Celebration* by Kool & the Gang.

Pictured: Maxine Barron receiving her prize from George Siljanoski in Melbourne.

Brolga govt injection

THE NSW Government has granted close to \$150k to assist with the construction of an additional accommodation wing for the Brolga Hotel Motel in the country town of Coleambally.

The cash injection is part of the Government's Regional Tourism Fund managed by Destination NSW, and will aim to boost the number of tourists to the town which is often booked to capacity.

"Tourism is vital to rural and regional communities, contributing \$19.5 billion to the NSW economy and directly employing 90,400 people," said NSW Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney Stuart Ayres.

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GSTC in Canada

THE next Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Global Conference is set to be held in Canada, taking place from 19-22 Nov 2020.

The conference will be hosted at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Grand Okanagan Resort in Kelowna, where a range of sustainable tourism leaders from around the world will share their thoughts on some of the key challenges and opportunities surrounding smart destination management and sustainable tourism development.

The conference will also feature a series of panels and presentations from an array of speakers from around the world.

For GSTC info, [CLICK HERE](#).

Marriott's 30 in 2020

GLOBAL hotel brand, Marriott International has announced plans to open more than 30 new luxury hotels in "established and emerging global hotspots" in 2020, as the operator continues its focus on widening its high-end travel portfolio.

"Our plan is to open more than 30 luxury properties in 2020 – an average of about three exciting new hotels per month – which speaks to the remarkable momentum that brands such as St. Regis, The Ritz-Carlton and EDITION have with affluent travellers, our Marriott Bonvoy members and hotel developers around the world," said Tony Capuano, EVP and Global CDO, Marriott International.

MOBILE travel experts from across Australia and the UK came together last week to celebrate 1000 Mile Travel Group's annual conference.

Held aboard Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas*, attendees were invited to reflect on the company's fifth year, with the theme "Power of Productivity" featuring an emphasis on productivity optimisation, team motivation, time management and risk assessment.

During the conference, the company also announced further news surrounding head office refinement and team expansion, advancements in ticketing and automation processes, as well as the launch of a dedicated 1000

Mile Travel Expert web page.

"This conference was another reminder to our company family and our suppliers that our priorities will always lie with all our Travel Experts getting the support they need," said Nicole Veltman, Executive Director, 1000 Mile Travel Group.

Pictured: Nick Anderson, Travel Expert; Tanya Vaz, Travel Expert; Leanne Clark, Travel Expert; Sue Dodd, Travel Expert; and Yosef Levi, Technology and Implementations Manager, 1000 Mile Travel Group.

AFTA UPDATE

from Jayson Westbury



WELL, that's a wrap for the federal parliament with both houses rising for the summer break last week and a return date set for Tue 02 Feb 2020 - 02/02/2020 – seems like a great date for the politicians to get back to work.

Meanwhile, the rest of the country will get on with our everyday activities and continue to do what we need to do to get on with it. While there is a very reasonable expectation for holidays to be taken, I am sure most people have to think back to our days at school to get eight straight weeks of.

But I am sure they will continue to get their message out and do all the things politicians do when not required to be in Canberra.

It has been a very busy year for federal politics including an election so I would suggest that a break is needed for all involved, including those who sit on our side of the desk. 2020 will be a big year for legislation and for all accounts, unfortunately, likely to have an impact on the travel

industry. We will continue to monitor the recommendations of the Hayne Report which is definitely going to have an impact on travel insurance, how it may be sold and remuneration levels are also in the spotlight.

Next year's budget could see an advanced plan to increase the passenger movement charge and that is likely to be another very big fight and process – we shall see.

Of course the difficult thing with politics is that it is very hard to actually plan for what might be coming next, so AFTA will remain ready to respond and negotiate as required with the government and opposition in the new year.

And while I am on politics, this Thu 12 Dec there is that little UK election that will sneak in a result and may have a rolling impact on the global travel and tourism industry depending on what the new parliament looks like, who is the Prime Minister and what plans may be implemented in relation to Brexit.

All I can say is that I can't wait to see what happens next.

Qatar double up

MINOR Hotels has announced the signing of two new properties in Doha, Qatar.

The group will operate the 44-storey, 228-key The Vyra Suites under its NH Collection brand in West Bay, which will feature one, two and three bedroom apartments.

The Plaza Doha Anatara Hotel & Suites in the Um Ghuwelina area will feature 292 rooms and suites.

NZ tourism boost

THE New Zealand Government has announced the recipients of its NZ\$13.3 million Tourism Infrastructure Fund, which span across 23 local councils.

The funds will go towards toilet and shower facilities, upgraded carparks and walkways in the allocated areas, with Central Hawkes Bay also receiving \$50K for a Tourism Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

To view the full list, [CLICK HERE](#).

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MTA wraps up nationwide 'thank you' functions

MTA – Mobile Travel Agents' annual round of nationwide 'thank you' functions for its industry partners and suppliers concluded in Perth, with earlier events taking place in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney.

Attended by CEO Don Beattie, members of his head office team, MTA Travel Advisors and over 350 guests, the events are MTA's chance to personally thank the suppliers for their support.



ANN McKinnon, MTA Northern NSW and Christine Oliver, Holland America Line/Seabourn.



MTA'S Tracey Flower, Lisa Dodds, Marion Picot, Deb Clarke, Shelly Hillis, Amber Amith, Qld BDM & Anne Mullins, MTA Product enjoying the sunset over Southbank Brisbane.



MTA'S Amanda Washington and Kim Newton with Sydney prize winners' Tim Chatfield, Sales Director Intercontinental Hotels and Resorts, and Rodney Muller, Skimax.



THE Queensland-based MTA team enjoyed a Christmas drink at The Penthouse at The Emporium Hotel, on Southbank Brisbane.



DON Beattie, CEO MTA; Rolf Huber, African Wildlife Safaris; Peter Miers, Intrepid Group; Jillian Van, African Wildlife Safaris; Jenna Mazer, Expedia TAAP; Zeena Croudace, MTA Product team at Diesel Bar in Melbourne.



BARRY Watts, Grand Pacific Holidays; Amber Smith, Qld BDM MTA; and Leon Hill, Viking Cruises enjoying the view over Brisbane.



PICTURED at The Lobby Bar at QT Hotel Perth are MTA's WA-based advisors and suppliers.



LEON Hill, Viking Cruises; Frank Levey, Cover-More Insurance; Zoe Gentle, Club Med; Tony Soden, Club Med; and Alex Scott, Air New Zealand.



ZEENA Croudace, Kathy Thomaidis, Tamara Gleadhill and Amelia Roth catching up over a drink in Melbourne.

Seabourn upgrades

SEABOURN has completed another milestone in the construction of *Seabourn Venture*, with the laying of the keel ceremony taking place in Italy late last week.

The cruise line has also revealed the ship will feature the unique Bow Lounge, offering guests a place to relax and observe the marine life from both inside and outside the ship.

Situated on Deck 6, the lounge will offer live footage from mounted cameras outside, with touch screens also showing the ship's plotted location.

Ocean Cay opens

MSC Cruises has welcomed its first guests into Ocean Cay Marine Reserve, the cruise line's new private island destination in the Bahamas.

Guests to the island will be able to enjoy a range of shore excursions such as snorkelling, stand up paddle boarding, and kayaking, as well as enjoy spa treatments, relax in a private cabana, or pay a visit to the Bahamian village.

The coming months will also see the addition of a Conservation Center, which will serve as an active base for coral education.

A first meeting of the minds



THE Travel Industry Hub (TTIH) recently hosted a Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) Board meeting at its North Sydney premises.

"The CATO Board were thrilled to be one of the first official meetings held at the Travel Industry Hub and look forward to supporting this excellent travel

industry initiative further in the future," said CATO Managing Director Brett Jardine.

Pictured: Members of CATO's Board gather for the meeting at TTIH's North Sydney office.

There is no doubt that 2020 is going to be biggest year yet! So to help you have something to look forward to in the new year, Club Med are giving you the chance to win a stay at the Club Med resort of your choice in Asia or the Indian Ocean.

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- Nightly entertainment

To win, tell us in 50 words or less the most creative way you will you grow your Club Med business in 2020. Send your entry to clubmed@traveldaily.com.au

Jenman adds tours

JENMAN Safaris has added six new customisable itineraries and two new group tours to its 2020 brochure.

The new tours include a seven-day Best of Hwange Fly-in package to experience Zimbabwe; an eight-day Kruger & Mozambique Safari and Beach Experience; and a 12-day Botswana Safari & Cycling Fly-In. Download the brochure [HERE](#).

VIP Anantara deal

GUESTS who book at Riverside Bangkok Resort during the second Elephant Boat Race and River Festival, taking place between 28 Feb and 01 Mar, will receive two VIP day passes to the event.

The package includes two nights' accom, race entry, live music, fun fair rides, food, and "free flow" drinks - email [HERE](#).

MONEY

WELCOME to Money, *TD's* Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

AU\$1 = US0.682

THE Aussie dollar slipped 0.2% against the USD overnight, as markets wait for the next step in the US-China trade talks.

Travellers heading to Europe will have their dollar stretched slightly further after the AUDEUR neared one-month highs, with the Euro dropping ahead of next week's European Central Bank meeting. The AUDCHF also plunged to three-week lows.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.682
UK	£0.519
NZ	\$1.042
Euro	€0.616
Japan	¥74.09
Thailand	฿20.69
China	¥4.804
South Africa	10.013
Canada	\$0.903
Crude oil	US\$59.20

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Contact Peter

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Contact Susan

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Contact Giulia

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TRAMADA EXPERT CONSULTANT

Melbourne - \$30per hour + super

Implement Tramada for a Melbourne based, boutique travel agency in this temp role starting February 2020. You must have strong Tramada GDS experience/knowledge as you will be rolling out this program within the office. Flexibility is guaranteed with this established, boutique travel agency in the South East suburbs of Melbourne.

Contact Matt

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RESERVATIONS CONSULTANT

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Assist clients to fulfill their dream adventure holiday with an extraordinary company who are making experiential travel affordable. This Australian owned adventure travel company is hugely focused on sustainability and ethical travel. Monday to Friday role in beautiful, modern offices. Ideal role for an adventure enthusiast.

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BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Brisbane - \$54K+ super + bonus

Join a global, high end wholesaler specialising in Japan. An ideal role if you are an experienced team leader/sales executive looking for a BDM role. You will be assisting agents by ensuring quotes are finalised and analysing low performance of sales in the stores you support. 10%-15% of your time will be conducting onsite visits to stores.

Contact Natasha

[VIEW JOB](#)

LEISURE BUSINESS LEADER

Launceston - \$55K + super + bonus

We are seeking a talented travel industry manager to join one of Australia's well-established luxury travel brands in Launceston. This global leader in the travel industry offers a wealth of amazing travel and cruise products and incredible tailor-made itineraries to suit all travellers. Uncapped commission and great travel benefits on offer.

Contact Priyanka

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tmstalent.com



Auckland | Brisbane | London | Melbourne | Sydney

NORTHERN FRANCE

It's more than you think!

Head to Northern France and spend some time exploring this historical and charming region, bursting with spectacular discoveries. The compelling museums and memorials of World War I are only a part of what Hauts-de-France is all about. It is also famed for medieval villages, royal chateaux, gothic art, horses and the iconic Chantilly cream!

from **\$379***
2 nights |  

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AGENT TOOLKIT NOW AVAILABLE!

Download our easy-to-use agent toolkit, including Facebook tiles!
Use to promote on Facebook, or attach to your newsletters and emails.

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The country hiding in plain sight

A destination which has every single type of traveller covered, Sri Lanka seduces its guests with timeless ruins, sprawling beaches and some of the world's best scenic journeys.

FOR those that prefer local interaction and wildlife over epic landscapes, the welcoming locals and abundance of roaming elephants are sure to please.

For years, Sri Lanka has been sat on the sidelines due to uncertainty around travel but now, all that has changed. As the world begins to recognise the nation's myriad of charms, between the rainforested peaks, endless beaches and verdant tea plantations, it sits top of the bucket list of many.

With destinations that have experienced some turbulence in the past, tailored travel provides security

and reassurance to travellers. Tailored travel allows your clients to experience Sri Lanka's alluring history, culture and natural beauty whilst combining unique cultural adventures to make it a more immersive local experience.

Tripfuser combines this need for a deeper cultural experience with in-destination Local Suppliers to open up a world of opportunities in Sri Lanka. Our local suppliers not only take your clients to the hidden treasures of this incredible nation but they take them into the homes of local communities to taste the flavourful food that many drool over.

Due to the size of this small country, your client doesn't have to choose between one or two of Sri Lanka's highlights - they can visit them all! It's easy to combine the best of these sights as well as unique experiences like spotting whales in Mirissa, marvelling at the balancing stilt fisherman, taking on one of the most scenic train journeys in the world and staying on one of Sri

Lanka's untrodden, dazzling white beaches.

Making these trips a reality is what Tripfuser do best. Working closely with the local suppliers is Tripfuser's Travel Concierge team who are with you every step of the way making sure your client's wishes are met. You can rest assured that the perfect Sri Lankan experience will be delivered to you and your client within 48 hours.

Whether your client is a seasoned traveller to Asia or they've never stepped foot on the continent, Sri Lanka is a country that effortlessly impresses.

FIND OUT MORE

Take advantage of this incredible opportunity to create tailored trips for your clients in 2020! Head to our Sri Lanka Trip Gallery **HERE** and see these unique experiences for yourself!