

## Awards excitement

**THERE'S** been a great response from the battered travel industry to the **Travel Daily Awards** announced yesterday, with many readers welcoming the initiative and particularly the opportunity to honour suppliers and agents who have gone to extraordinary lengths during the coronacrisis. Full details of the awards are at [awards.traveldaily.com.au](http://awards.traveldaily.com.au), with nominations from past and present industry staffers to open up from later this week.

## Abu Dhabi inspo

**SOME** of the stunning five star luxury hotels in Abu Dhabi will feature in a special Abu Dhabi Hotels online session taking place this afternoon.

The W Hotel Yas Island, the Rosewood, Edition Abu Dhabi, Qasr Al Sarab and the landmark Emirates Palace are all participating in the online event which will feature an opportunity for agents to win a spot on a 2021 Abu Dhabi famil.

Be quick - it's happening at 4pm AEST today - [CLICK HERE](#).

## Rudd Wed session

**DON'T** forget to register for tomorrow's interview with AFTA CEO Darren Rudd which will be broadcast live at 1pm AEST from The Travel Industry Hub - sign up at [thetravelindustryhub.com](http://thetravelindustryhub.com).

[Register for Rudd](#)

## Diamonds in the rough

**DESPITE** overall sentiment for international travel remaining flat for Australian travellers, there are several destinations bucking the trend, according to an Aug travel trend report from Luxury Escapes.

Among the travel experiences receiving renewed interest from Aussies are purchases for Japanese ski trips in 2021, as well as holiday packages to the Maldives next year.

Overall, the appetite for international travel is only 8.8% of what levels were pre-pandemic, Luxury Escapes claims, with the majority of the recent interest being for holidays to New

Zealand, which has seen a 290% spike in local product views when compared to the yearly average.

On the domestic front, travel restrictions have seen a steep rise in interest for intrastate travel from people in Western Australia and Queensland, with product views for local travel packages up 280% and 190% respectively on the yearly average.

The relatively clean bill of COVID health for Queensland has also piqued the interest of prospective interstate travellers, seeing a 140% rise in product views from all states except Vic.

As expected, the travel sentiment for Victorians remains low as the state continues to battle COVID outbreaks and contend with additional travel restrictions to mitigate any further spread, however, the data did indicate a pent up demand for travel between the two lockdown periods this year.

## Student travel trial

**AUSTRALIA** is set to open its borders to international students, with a pilot program to see a small number return to South Australia next month.

The state will welcome 300 international students, with eligibility to be considered based on course requirements and study streams, with face-to-face and practical learning requirements to be prioritised.

Less than 60 international students arrived in Australia in Jun, a dramatic drop compared to the approximately 46,000 that travelled to the country on student visas during the same period last year, according to Australian Bureau of Statistics data released on Fri.

## Jul travel plummets

**PROVISIONAL** statistics on international travel in and out of Australia last month indicate further declines in traffic as travel restrictions continued to make their impact felt.

The Jul estimates from the Australian Bureau of Statistics released yesterday highlighted 18,300 inbound trips, of whom 10,700 were Australian citizens.

That was down almost 30% on the previous month, and 99.1% lower than the corresponding period 12 months ago.

There were 1,500 arrivals of citizens from NZ, 630 from the UK, 620 from China, 560 from the US and 480 from India.

The figures indicated an increase in departures for Jul, with 57,000 trips, up 42.2% on Jun but down 96.8% year-on-year.

With outbound travel still subject to strict approvals, just 12,300 of the departures were Australian citizens.

## Today's issue of TD

**Travel Daily** today has five pages of news including our **PUZZLE** page and a full page from **Macao Government Tourism Office**.

## VA bondholder challenge rejected

**THE** Federal Court has rejected a request from Virgin Australia's bondholders to force a vote on their alternate proposal at the upcoming Creditors Meeting.

A proposal to have an independent "facilitator" oversee the meeting was also rejected by Justice John Middleton.

The group, backed by five former VA executives, has flagged further legal action to pursue its rival plan for the carrier.

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Travel & Cruise Weekly

## WTTC rallies Oz

THE World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), along with 120 of the world's major travel and global business leaders have called on Australia, South Korea, Spain and the heads of the state of the G7 countries (Germany, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, the UK and USA) to implement global protocols which will allow tourism and travel to restart.

WTTC Chief Executive Officer Gloria Guevara said critical action was urgently needed to save millions of jobs.

"Any measures taken in silos moving forward will only worsen the plight of millions of ordinary people...we need to transcend politics and put the millions of livelihoods which have been affected by COVID-19 front and centre," Guevara said.

WTTC is also advocating for face masks, testing and tracing, quarantine for positive tests only and the adoption of universal protocols.

## Macao readies agents

MACAO is the latest destination to provide travel agents across Australia and New Zealand with support and education by launching a dedicated specialist training website today.

The new Macao Travel Expert website currently features the first two of four modules dubbed "Macao ready go" and "What makes Macao special", with content purposely developed to reflect what travel agents need to know and prepare for when international travel resumes.

Developed via the **Travel Daily** Training Academy, the website provides a thorough background on the destination that spans 400 years of eastern and western cultures, as well as geographic information, travelling to the destination and essential COVID-safe travel observances and recommendations.

Travel agents can also learn about the unique selling

propositions of the destination including UNESCO World Heritage listed sites, the glamour of the numerous resorts and distinct gastronomy, with those who complete all modules in with a chance of winning one of 24 Coles Group gift cards.

In 2019, there were 109,000 Australian and New Zealanders who travelled to Macao, staying an average of 2.5 nights and representing a growth of 10% over the prior year, according to figures provided by the Macao Government Tourist Office.

See the **back page** for details.

## Canadian learning

WHISTLER Blackcomb is the topic of the next Destination Canada webinar, which will invite travel agents to discover the British Columbia-based ski resort.

**CLICK HERE** for session time one and **HERE** for session time two.



## Window Seat

WHO says that an airport can't be a place to appreciate the finer things in life?

Certainly not Istanbul Airport in Turkey which has recently unveiled The Istanbul Airport Museum, an art installation featuring interesting pieces from the country's history for travellers to appreciate while they are in transit.

"We want to turn the time spent at the airport into a unique experience and our aim is to turn our passengers attention on art and culture," enthused the airport's CEO Kadri Samsunlu.

The first featured exhibition is the Treasures of Turkey: Faces of the Throne, collating 316 unique pieces from a selection of 29 Turkish museums.

# Etihad Wellness

An extensive range of wellness initiatives to give you peace of mind when you travel.

To learn more about our wellness initiatives visit [etihad.com/wellness](https://www.etihad.com/wellness)

**Your wellness, our priority.**

Choose Well.



### Wellness Ambassadors



Online Wellness Hub



Social Distancing



Refreshed Cabins



Deep Cleaning



Equipped Crew



Enhanced Hygiene



Wellness Kits



Booking Flexibility



Refreshed Meal Service



Lounge Initiatives



Vehicle Sanitisation

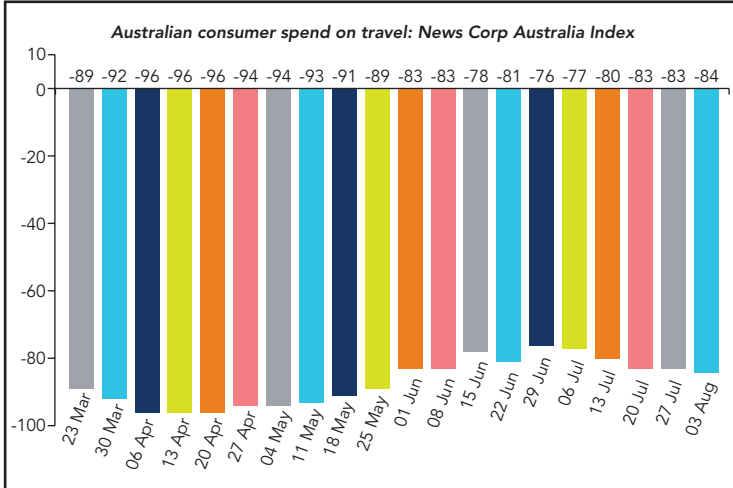


Sustainability Focused





## Closures slam spending



### EXCLUSIVE

**THIS** week's News Corp Australia travel spending figures indicate the ongoing impact of restrictions in Vic and the acceleration of border closures following the outbreak.

Collated for the week ending 03 Aug, spending remains at historically low levels, down 84 percentage points on the previous corresponding period 12 months ago.

News Corp's Fiona Nilsson, MD Food & Travel, said the downturn appeared to be stabilising, with data suggesting that most spending on travel is for accommodation within driving distance of capital cities.

She said the media group's content was aiming to highlight the best Australia has to offer for those planning a road trip, while also keeping the dream alive for those longing to venture abroad.

### MSC reboots ops

**MSC Cruises** has welcomed back its first guests on *MSC Grandiosa*, with the cruise line's flagship departing yesterday from Genoa for a seven-night cruise through the western Mediterranean.

The cruise line's comprehensive health and safety protocol have been implemented for all guests and crew members.

Screening procedures include a temperature check, medical review and a COVID-19 swab test for every guest prior to boarding.

### EK adds Warsaw

**EMIRATES** will resume passenger flights to Warsaw, Poland from 04 Sep.

Initially operating twice weekly with a third frequency from 07 Oct, the move will expand EK's global network to 75 cities.

## AFTA UPDATE

from the Australian Federation of Travel Agents

**THESE** are tough times and we are all having to make tough decisions.

It is no different for us as an organisation.

In Sep, AFTA will take a critical step to preserve the organisation, and today, wishes to reassure

members and industry that it is a necessary change to ensure the long-term viability of the organisation, its future and its people.

COVID-19 has brought with it many challenges and no one has felt the impact of the pandemic more strongly than our travel and tourism sector.

The industry would be aware that on 25 Mar, AFTA moved to a support and monitor framework to ensure that members had the necessary support to navigate through these unprecedented and challenging times.

The primary focus of the Federation became centred on ensuring that travel intermediaries, our members, were kept updated and engaged.

AFTA produced a range of dedicated resources to support the operations of our member's businesses and increased the



afta

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF TRAVEL AGENTS

number and scope of webinars and communication initiatives.

We also worked hard to promote the importance and value of agents in mainstream, travel and sector media and the critical

need for tailored support from Government.

Our commitment to supporting members remains steadfast.

Like many organisations, AFTA also needs to take necessary steps to preserve the organisation and therefore from 01 Sep, AFTA will reduce its hours of operation and will introduce a pro-rata reduction in the team's working hours.

This change will result in AFTA further rationalising member services to ensure that it still remains focused on supporting members in the areas most needed.

The AFTA Board of Directors and entire AFTA team remain committed to supporting members so they can get through COVID-19 and to deliver initiatives that support the recovery of the travel and tourism sector.

### Recovery from 2023

**A FORECAST** from hotel data provider STR and consultant Tourism Economics has warned American hotel occupancy may not recover fully until 2023.

The firms said they expect average hotel occupancy of 40% this year, slowly climbing to 52% in 2021, with both numbers down from the healthier 66% average occupancy experienced nationwide in the US in 2019.

### Silversea 2021/22

**SILVERSEA** has unveiled a revised Expedition Voyage portfolio for 2021/2022, featuring 157 cruises including the world's first ever Expedition World Cruise.

There's also the cruise line's longest-ever voyage to Antarctica, with a 20-day exploration attempting to cross the Antarctic Polar Circle and Galapagos trips aboard the new *Silver Origin* - [silversea.com](http://silversea.com).


## Honouring travel agents and suppliers for their industry support through COVID-19

Nominations open Fri 21 August

More information at [awards.traveldaily.com.au](http://awards.traveldaily.com.au)



Travel Daily



Catch up on the news of the week

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

## Unscramble

**HOW** many words can you make out of these nine letters? Every word needs to include the centre letter, have four letters or more and not be a proper noun or a plural. You can only use each letter once.

E	T	C
A	H	H
R	A	E

Good – 24 words  
 Very good – 36 words  
 Excellent – 47 words

NOTE: We've used Chambers Dictionary to decide what words are acceptable.

## Whose flag is this?



**THIS** flag incorporates the colours of the flag of the country which rules over it.

Similar to the Japanese flag, the circle located in the centre represents the sun.

The white of the flag stands for ice and snow, which (here's a big hint) covers most of the country. The flag initially proposed in

1973 for the country was green with a cross design in the centre, but that was rejected.

This flag was designed by a local artist and was one of 555 designs that were submitted in 1978 when they decided to choose a new flag again.

Do you know whose flag this is? Check tomorrow for the answer.

## World Mosquito Day



**IT SEEMS** a strange thing to celebrate, but 20 Aug is World Mosquito Day, which commemorates the discovery by Sir Ronald Ross that female mosquitoes transmit malaria between humans.

Ross won the Nobel Prize for

Medicine in 1902 for his work, which enabled scientists to better understand the role of mozzies in the disease, aiding efforts towards prevention.

There's not much you can do to celebrate the day, except maybe making sure you don't get bitten!

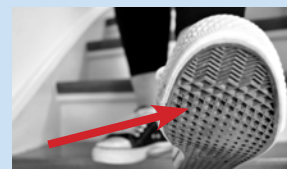
### ANSWERS 17 AUG

Where in the world: Kelpies, The Helix, Scotland

4	2	6	1	5	3	7	8	9
9	7	1	6	2	8	4	3	5
3	5	8	9	7	4	2	6	1
6	4	3	5	8	1	9	2	7
1	9	7	4	6	2	8	5	3
2	8	5	3	9	7	6	1	4
5	6	4	8	3	9	1	7	2
7	3	9	2	1	6	5	4	8
8	1	2	7	4	5	3	9	6

## Pub quiz

- Which country would you find the Sagrada Familia?
- Pho is the national dish of which Asian nation?
- The American continents derived their name from which Italian explorer?
- Much of ancient Persia is now occupied by what modern day country?
- What is the currency most commonly used in East Timor?
- What is the national sport of Thailand?
- What animal is clutching a sword on the Sri Lankan flag?
- Who is the current Prime Minister of Canada?
- Which country has the internet domain code .fj?
- True or false: Kylie Minogue and comedian Wil Anderson starred in Tourism Australia's Matesong campaign late last year?
- What city does this collection of pictures spell out?





## Hilton revamps Hawaii



**EMBASSY Suites** by Hilton Waikiki Beach Walk (pictured) has completed an US\$8 million refurbishment of its Hula Tower and Aloha Tower.

Managed by Outrigger Hospitality Group, the resort's major refresh features all-new furnishings and local art installations, as well as upgrades to its Pool Bar and Pakini Bar, complete with a new menu and cocktail offerings.

"The impressive new suite design was inspired by our exquisite ocean destination, with warm hues of blue and green as well as Hawaiian patterns incorporated throughout the property to honour our host culture of welcoming guests with warmth and generosity," said the hotel's General Manager Simeon Miranda.

The resort is situated in the heart of Waikiki, very close to the beach, and in line with Hilton's CleanStay with Lysol protection program has implemented a rigorous cleaning and hygiene

program.

Hawaii currently requires all arrivals to self-quarantine for 14 days in their accommodations.

### Heritage refreshes

**HERITAGE** Line has this week relaunched its website, featuring a refreshed design and a more user-friendly functionality.

The new site has also introduced a new news section called The Magazine featuring content such as personal stories and lifestyle pieces.

### Aviation changes

**CAPA** is gearing up to host its next Masterclass Series of online sessions, with the upcoming webinar to focus on how the airline pax experience will change due to the pandemic.

Topics to be covered will include health screening at airports and social distancing on aircraft.

The session is scheduled to take place on 26 Aug at 11pm (AEST) - register [HERE](#).

## IATA's checklist

**THE** International Air Transport Association (IATA) has launched a new checklist to help airlines implement the International Civil Aviation Organization's COVID-19 guidance.

The self-assessment covers important aspects of COVID protocols such as: pre-arrival notifications, check in, embarkation and disembarkation procedures, aircraft cleaning, on board air quality standards, in-flight operations, flight and cabin crew guidelines and maintenance of airport facilities.

## Intrepid welfare

**INTREPID** Travel and World Animal Protection have teamed up to launch a complimentary Animal Welfare Policy Toolkit.

Customisable and free to download from Intrepid's website, the toolkit has been launched to help travel companies protect wild animals used for entertainment after the COVID-19 shutdown.

The toolkit intends to help tourism companies implement more ethical wildlife practices into their businesses in an easily accessible way, and includes steps that can be taken to become wildlife-friendly, including information on how to draft an animal welfare policy.

## Orlando hotels shut

**TWO** hotels at Universal Orlando will close indefinitely this week in a bid to consolidate the company's overall hotel network due to COVID-19-related downturns.

From 21 Aug, Loews Sapphire Falls Resort and Universal's Aventura Hotel will temporarily close, with no definite reopening date announced.

The two new closures leave just half of Universal's eight hotels in operation, with a number yet to reopen since shutting in Mar.

## Emerald in Russia

**EMERALD** Waterways has released a new 2021 Russian river cruise brochure for the Australian market.

The season will see Emerald introducing a new river ship to its portfolio, the recently refurbished *Nizhny Novgorod*, which will sail the Volga River from May 2021.

A highlight of the program is the 11-day Imperial Charms of Russia river cruise, sailing from St Petersburg to Moscow and offering guests the opportunity to discover traditional villages and vibrant cities.

Drawcards of the voyage include guided tours of Moscow and St Petersburg, a Shashlik lunch in the village of Mandrogi, and a visit to the Monastery of St. Cyril on the White Lake.

The cruise leads in from \$5,095 per person twin share.

## MONEY

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

**AU\$1 = US\$0.719**

**THE** Australian dollar is back at 18-month highs, with the Nasdaq also reaching a record.

With financial markets starting the week on a positive note, the Aussie dollar hit a high overnight, while the United States' technology-focused Nasdaq peaked off the back of strong markets for gold, silver and bitcoin.

The positive sentiment saw the US dollar weaken.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.719
UK	£0.549
NZ	\$1.092
Euro	€0.606
Japan	¥76.39
Thailand	฿22.30
China	¥4.938
South Africa	12.52
Canada	\$0.947
Crude oil	US\$44.80

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**Travel Daily**

[www.traveldaily.com.au](http://www.traveldaily.com.au)

*Travel Daily* is part of the Business Publishing Group family of publications.

Produced each weekday since 1994, *Travel Daily* is Australia's leading travel industry publication.

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