



## Hamill decides to drive away

**CHRIS** Hamill has decided that it is time to leave his role as Managing Director of DriveAway, after 11 years leading the organisation.

The move marks the end of an era for Hamill who started with DriveAway in 1992 as a reservations consultant.

The self-drive specialist's current General Manager Charlie Youssef will lead the company from 04 Jan with the full support of Hamill and the DriveAway management team.

## Norfolk Wed boost

**AIR** New Zealand will add a new Wed departure from Sydney to Norfolk Island effective from 06 Jan, complementing the existing Mon and Fri flights on the route.

NZ is also now operating thrice weekly BNE-NLK services with the launch last week of a new Thu flight, in addition to Tue and Sun.

## CASA ticks Rex jet plans

**THE** Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) has issued a new High Capacity Air Operator's Certificate (AOC) to Regional Express, as the next key step in preparation for its new Boeing 737-800NG mainline capital city flights set to launch next year.

The airline acknowledged the "herculean efforts of the CASA team for its professional and unwavering commitment", with the transition to the new AOC meaning the carrier is now approved for Regular Public Transport (RPT) services using the jets on its existing network.

Rex Executive Chairman Lim Kim Hai said the regulator's dedication to the recovery effort during this period of national emergency had been "nothing short of outstanding".

"CASA has gone above and beyond to ensure that the aviation industry is fully supported by the regulator in all

aspects...CASA's assistance was critical at a time when all airlines were fighting for survival," he said.

Lim also noted that in launching domestic operations on the key routes between Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane in Mar 2021, the carrier was "proud to help in the national recovery effort by offering employment to some of the thousands made redundant by other carriers".

He said the debut of the new operations means "travellers for the first time do not have to choose between cheap fares with minimal service or more reliable service with premium pricing".

"Just as it has done for the last 70 years...Rex will provide domestic travellers with a safe and reliable yet affordable air service with its trademark country hospitality," he said.

The new Rex jet flights will debut 01 Mar with an initial fleet of six 737-800s.

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today has six pages of news including our PUZZLE page.

## Agents win Tuscany

**SIX** lucky *Travel Daily* readers now have a fabulous trip to Tuscany including Qatar Airways flights from Australia, five nights accommodation and a host of authentic Tuscan experiences to look forward to, after being named as the winners of the Travel to Italy Academy training program.

The Australian winners are Alfina Maugeri from Flight Centre Baulkham Hills New South Wales; Katy Clark from Untold Travel; Leah Gage of In2Travel; and Anita Coombs from Pakenham Travel.

Winners from across the Tasman include Bruce Dalton from Flight Centre and Selese Rowe from Travel Managers New Zealand.

See [traveltoitalyacademy.com](https://traveltoitalyacademy.com) for more information.

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## AAT Kings gets personal

AAT Kings has launched a new My AAT Kings Travel Portal which allows guests to customise their trip, access itineraries and record important emergency info.

The initiative “means even less hassle for agents and their customers,” the company said, allowing clients to quickly and

easily complete registration for their upcoming trips.

The platform is live from today, along with the introduction of a new Wellbeing Declaration for Guided Holidays, which guests must complete via the portal within 72 hours of departure.

The declaration is part of extensive health and safety measures now in place, along with contact tracing via QR codes on all Day Tours and Short Breaks.

AAT Kings CEO Matt Fuller said the innovation would “give guests peace of mind while enjoying the very best of Australia - and in the near future, New Zealand.

“We take great pride in the trust and valuable relationships we have built across the industry and we continually strive to equip agents with the best tools for success, whilst maintaining the wellbeing of our guests as a priority,” Fuller said.

See [my.aatkings.com](http://my.aatkings.com).

## Package angst

AFTA is expecting a robust discussion today during a fully-subscribed member update to discuss the detail of the recently announced \$128 million industry support package (TD 14 Dec).

Opinions are running hot across the sector, with a *travelBulletin* article posted online yesterday prompting an outpouring of commentary on social media.

As always we welcome your input, so if you want to have your say, send your article (400 words) to [feedback@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:feedback@traveldaily.com.au).



## Amadeus SQ NDC

SINGAPORE Airlines has announced a new agreement with Amadeus which will make the carrier's full range of NDC offers available via the Amadeus Travel Platform.

Travel agents worldwide will soon be able to shop, book and pay for all SQ NDC product via the KrisConnect program, including seat selection, excess baggage, special fares and personalised merchandising offers for loyalty members and corporate travellers.

## Fraser's giveaway

FRASERS Hospitality is giving away over 1,000 room nights as part of a “remembering kindness” campaign which aims to recognise everyday heroes.

Members of the public can nominate individuals via an online submission form, with complimentary stays based on the most deserving stories - [frasershospitality.com](http://frasershospitality.com).

## IATA crew jobs

THE International Air Transport Association (IATA) is urging govts across the globe to consider aviation workers as essential for COVID-19 vaccination.

IATA CEO Alexandre de Juniac said for the global distribution of the immunisation “it is essential that we have a qualified workforce in place to ensure a functioning logistics chain”.

## Thailand entry

AUSTRALIA is one of almost 60 countries included in a new Tourist Visa Exemption Scheme which allows visitors to stay in the country for at least 45 days (including a quarantine period).

To be eligible, travellers must have a Certificate of Entry, proof of booking confirmation of a State Quarantine hotel, health insurance covering COVID-19 for their entire stay, and a negative COVID-19 test result within 72 hours of departure.

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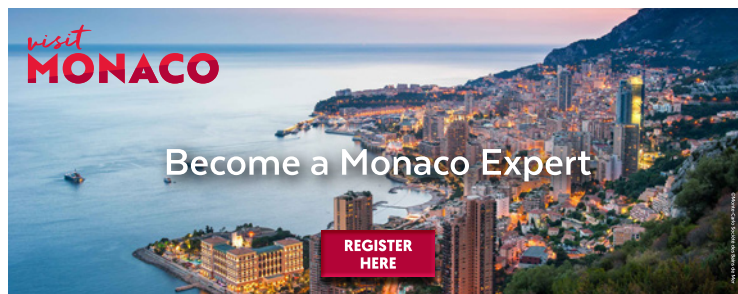
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## Blue Lagoon delays

**BLUE** Lagoon Cruises has announced the extension of its suspension of all operations through to the end of Feb.

The cruise line said the large majority of its bookings have already chosen to defer their travel until after Mar, with key source markets to Fiji unlikely to resume prior to then.

Blue Lagoon added that if there were any announcements of the re-opening of international borders prior to Mar, it would revise its planning.

## Seabourn plots a new course

**SEABOURN** Cruise Line has revised its schedule for its 2021 Alaska & British Columbia season to meet the requirements of the Framework for Resuming Cruise Ship Operations, and will now operate rotating northbound and southbound seven-day trips.

## Nov pax arrivals spike

**ARRIVAL** trips in Australia for Nov show a 20.5% increase compared to the previous month, the highest level since Apr, new figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' overseas travel stats reveal.

Of the 29,800 estimated arrival trips for last month, 15,500 were by Australian citizens, while 12.5% of all arrivals were New Zealanders, the largest other group travelling to Australia.

Other arrivals by citizenship include 1,300 from the United Kingdom (increasing 9.6%), 1,200 from China (20.7%), 1,100 from India (6.3%) and 780 from the United States (11.1%).

Those arriving on temp/other visas made up 7.3% of all arrivals, while the total number of arrivals was down 98.3% on Nov 2019.

Last month saw an arrivals increase of 2,800% recorded for Victoria and 1,600% for the ACT,

as well as smaller increases for Queensland (39.8%), Western Australia (23.4%) and New South Wales (19.8%).

However, decreases were recorded for Tasmania (-67.6%), South Australia (-39.9%) and the Northern Territory (-2.4%).

The statistics were not as positive for departures however, which showed a 3.2% decrease compared to the previous month, and a 97.4% decrease compared to Nov 2019.

Of the 45,500 estimated departure trips, 11,000 were by Australian citizens, while 20.1% were Chinese & 20% were leaving on temporary student visas.

The other three largest countries of citizenship for departures were India, increasing by 17.7%, Vietnam (up by 10.1%) and New Zealand (up by 2.3%).

Only 1,100 Britons departed in Nov, a 15.3% decrease on Oct.



## Window Seat

**WITH** so many Aussies gearing up to take a domestic holiday this summer, this next trickle of convenient news will come as a great relief to most we feel.

The newly launched National Toilet Map is flush full of public toilet locations so that anyone travelling away from home won't be too far away from a loo, with information on more than 19,000 toilets.

The tool even allows you to plan a road trip anywhere in Australia and calculate the number of toilets accessible along the way, taking the stress out of knowing where to make a pit stop, a chore that drives many of us around the u-bend!

So, take a leak, ah, we mean a peek at the new toilet map tool **HERE** and download it on Apple Podcasts or Google Play.

## Meet our Wellness Ambassadors

Because we want your customers to feel comfortable and cared for when they travel with us, we've introduced a specially trained team of Wellness Ambassadors who will be on hand at Abu Dhabi Airport and on board to answer questions and share advice on how to stay safe during the trip, so that you can relax knowing your customers are in good hands.

**Choose Well.** [etihad.com/wellness](https://etihad.com/wellness)





## Cover-More COVID

**COVER-MORE** Travel Insurance has formally launched additional COVID-19 travel insurance services to the market, a move flagged last month (**TD** 26 Nov).

The new cover is available for Aussies when they travel domestically or to New Zealand, as well as other international destinations when they become available via a travel corridor arrangement down the track.

The new benefits cover quarantine costs and disruption to suppliers caused by COVID-19.

## Qatar takes off the slippers



**QATAR** Airways recently hosted a celebratory end-of-year event at the Sheraton Melbourne,

attended by key trade partners and member of the travel sector.

The fun event was the first time many of the carrier's staff were reunited face-to-face with key contacts, and for some people this was the first time they were able to dress up and enjoy an industry event all year.

**Pictured:** Senior Sales Executive Barry Laaksonen; Corporate Sales Manager David Crawford; Regional Marketing Manager Dianne Biviano; Sales Support Coordinator Shani Bulliff; Vice President Sales Australia & Asia Thomas Scruby; Head of Agency Sales Pamela Pavitt; Marketing Executive Hamish Ho; Senior Sales Support Agent Oula Abdou; Marketing Officer Bianca Carrettin and Senior Sales Exec Sally Hann.

## Last chance to win

**TODAY** is the last day of our Christmas competition.

We're asking the industry to write a poem or rhyme looking at the silver linings of 2020 or rhyme looking forward to 2021.

The best entry will win a Haigh's chocolate hamper.

Send your entries to [christmas@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:christmas@traveldaily.com.au) by COB today 16 Dec.

**Today's entry comes from Justin Hatcher from Adventure World:**

*The year started in a haze as the western plains caught ablaze.*

*Our sunburnt country choked with smoke as our precious wildlife are faced with unspeakable terrors!*

*There was no hope, this is no joke, 2020 started in horror!*

*Finally, the rains came and dampened the pain. We hoped to rebuild our 2020 spirits again. Then came the plague.*

*Throwing a blanket of chaos over the world as we locked ourselves down and watched our industries crumble.*

*Picking our selves up only to stumble into a new horror. How can we stay humble?*

*Black Lives Matter and a global leader posing as the Mad Hatter... when will it be over?*

*I see Christmas lights in the distance and celebrations with loved ones full of hugs and kisses.*

*We are close to the end... a fizzer of a year full of fear and helplessness.*

*We are one but we are many and together we with weather any storm.*

*We are born strong and will always hold on.*

*As global emissions drop due to the global stop, we see a positive change in the air.*

*Our precious world is able to breathe again and repair.*

*It was a fizzer of a year there's no doubt about it. But maybe, just maybe we will discover it was all worth it.*

*We will rebuild and that future is near. Now let's all hold hands and together cheer "Happy New Year."*

## UP FRONT

brought to you by Etihad

**WITH** 2021 on the horizon it's time we look forward to a new year and if all goes to plan, a year that involves much more air travel.



Next year, we're looking forward to a time where we can focus on recovery and once again welcome passengers from all over the globe back on board! Here at Etihad, we're actively working towards a future where travel will return to a new state of normal. The work we do now and moving into 2021 will be essential to shaping this future.

We feel optimistic that we can adapt to these new times by continuing to pioneer innovations and technologies - from launching our industry-first 'Wellness Program', which protects the health and hygiene of our guests; to spearheading industry-leading contactless technology at Abu Dhabi airport and manufacturing our very own PPE!

We're also working with cutting edge developers to harness technology and global policy makers to ensure people can travel safely, with peace of mind. Thank you again for your great support throughout 2020. I wish you a happy and safe festive season and all good wishes for 2021.

**Sarah Built**  
**Etihad Airways,**  
**Vice President Sales,**  
**Australia and South Asia**



## Mouthwash test

**A NEW** medical startup called tFRWD has partnered with aviation strategy firm SimpliFlying to launch a new DIY COVID-19 test kit that can be completed before boarding flights.

The novel testing kit comes in the form of a mouthwash and is designed to expedite the recovery of the aviation sector and alleviate some of the burden of mass testing being placed on airports and airlines.

The test takes less than one minute to complete and results can be returned within 24-48 hrs when dropped off at a lab or drop box at a retail partner store.

Watch a demonstration of the mouthwash test in action **HERE**.

## Pub quiz

1. The Temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, was located in which modern-day country?
2. What is Norway's busiest port?
3. After Berlin, what is the world's second-largest German-speaking city?
4. The Theatre Royal, the oldest surviving theatre in mainland Australia, is located in which town?
5. The Big Prawn is located outside which Australian town?
6. What is the largest town in New South Wales' Orana region?
7. Queenstown, New Zealand, is set on what lake?
8. In which two countries would you most notably find a 'Victoria Harbour'?
9. What sort of bird is depicted in the flag of Papua New Guinea?
10. The Skytree is a broadcasting and observation tower in which city?
11. What city is this collection of pictures spelling out?



+



+



## Whose flag is this?



**THIS** flag is unlike many of its Latin American neighbours, with a unique ethnic and cultural mix, possibly coming from the fact that it was the only Dutch colony on the mainland of the New World to survive into the 20th century. In fact the flag more closely

resembles those in the Caribbean. The country had another flag with five different coloured stars, but it was changed in 1975 because the stars represented different ethnicities, rather than emphasising unity. Do you know whose flag it is?

## Sudoku

## FIENDISH

**THE** aim of Sudoku is to complete the entire grid using the numbers 1-9. Numbers can only be used once in each row, column, and 3x3 box.

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

www.sudokuoftheday.com – visit them and get a new Sudoku every day!

## Funnies Flashback



**WE'VE** trawled through the **TD** Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 15 Apr 2014:

**HERE'S** the way to gain some social media notoriety.

A Twitter user named 'Sarah' is in hot water after sending a message to American Airlines purporting to be from "Al Qaida" and threatening to do "something really big".

The carrier responded with a tweet advising that "we take these threats very seriously" adding that Sarah's IP address would be forwarded to the FBI.

This in turn saw a series of desperate pleas from Sarah including "omfg I was kidding", "I'm so sorry I'm scared now", and "I was joking and it was my friend not me, take her IP address not mine" - culminating in "I'm f\*\*\*ing 14 years old, do they think I'm gonna blow up a plane or something. I'm just stupid okay".

The original tweet - now deleted - went viral, with more than 10,000 retweets - and 'Sarah' now has over 20,000 followers on the social media network.

### ANSWERS 15 DEC

Where in the world: Hallgrímskirkja, Reykjavík, Iceland

Pub quiz: 1 Mount Wellington, 2 Scotland, 3 Nebraska, 4 Thailand, 5 Sydney, Brisbane and Port Macquarie, 6 Ovens Valley, 7 Bodrum, 8 Turkey, 9 c) In the 1970s, 10 Mississippi River

Unscramble: chip, chirp, chirpy, chop, copy, COPYRIGHT, crop, crypt, grip, hypo, optic, photic, picot, pitch, pitchy, pith, pithy, pity, porch, port, pricy, prig, ropy, thorp, topi, topic, trip, trophy, tropic, typo



## Working hols first

**AUSTRALIA** should move to relaunch its high-yield, long-term international visitor market first in order to expedite the recovery of the tourism sector, according to Dr Jeff Jarvis, Director, Graduate Tourism Program at Monash University.

The tourism expert believes working holiday makers could make up the bulk of this inbound traffic, supplying SME tourism businesses in regional areas and visitor hotspots like Byron Bay.

## Rex resumes Mildura

**REGIONAL** Express (Rex) will resume flights between Mildura and Adelaide from 04 Jan 2021, close to nine months after the service was suspended due to state govt border restrictions.

The carrier will recommence the route with two return services per week on Mon and Thu, with the airline confirming eligible residents will still be able to take advantage of its Rex Community Fare scheme that caps prices at \$128 per person one way.

## ACCOMMODATION

**WELCOME** to Accommodation Updates, *Travel Daily's* Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to [accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au).



Marking Marriott International's first property in Argentinian Patagonia, the **Sheraton Bariloche** has been signed into life with Grupo Hoteles Panamericano. The 161-room hotel will be located in the foothills of the Argentinean Andes, and is slated to debut in Jan 2022. It will offer outstanding views to the Nahuel Huapi Lake, and is currently branded as Hotel Panamericano Bariloche, which is just steps from San Martín Street.



Eleme Day Spa has just opened at **Byron**, a **Crystalbrook Collection Resort**, which is located moments from the beach. The Spa is part of a \$6 million refresh, and offers bespoke facial and body therapies using the internationally renowned Sodashi skincare range. For massage therapies, Eleme has partnered with Byron Bay's Cura Co Lab to develop custom-made therapeutic oils.



**QT Hotels & Resorts** has launched **Floor'd** by QT, a one-of-a-kind event experience allowing guests to take over an entire floor of one of its hotels and "party like its no longer 2020". Tapping into the growing demand for experience-based stays, the host and 15 to 40 of their friends will be offered one whole floor matched with individualised service by a team of hosts. There are multiple packages to choose from, including a three course sit-down dinner in the hallway, VIP drinks on arrival and more.

Skroo Turner on Flight Centre, the pandemic and what the future holds for the business and industry - read it all in our exclusive interview in the December issue of *travelBulletin*.

travelBulletin



## Livn the dream in Sydney



**OPEN** connectivity hub of tours and activities, Livn, has secured a new home in Surry Hills in Sydney, a move the company believes will provide a launchpad for greater "innovation, personal safety and fun".

Located at 49 Reservoir Street, the funky new premises features "chillout areas", fun spaces and a high-tech kitchen, with staff now having more flexibility to either connect directly with colleagues or take a break.

Livn CEO Mark Rizzuto said the move formed part of the business' wider plan to adjust to the ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic.

"The current uncertain times are not meant to make businesses stand still, it is the perfect opportunity to adjust business operations," he said.

"Livn must acknowledge these conditions and adapt accordingly, or risk being caught up in having the rug pulled from under our own feet.

"To do nothing, or to stay the same, waiting and praying for a better economic environment is fraught with danger," Rizzuto added.

While promoting the benefits of the office move, the Livn chief also spruiked the opportunities to evolve the corporate culture and adapt to a new hybrid work from home model.

"Operating and environmental conditions aside, the work from home evolution is now a firm part of our corporate fabric, but it comes with the risk of loss to company culture and meaningful human interactions," he said.

"Companies will need to create cultural anchors and safety nets or risk erosion to their existing culture, and equally concerning, offer no identifiable culture to new employees coming on board."

**Pictured:** Livn Chief Operating Officer Steve Martinez and Mark Rizzuto outside Livn's new Surry Hills office.