

## Today's issue of TD

**Travel Daily** today has six pages of news including our PUZZLES, plus a full page showcasing the brand new Visit Flanders travel industry training platform.

## ATAC goes virtual

**THE** Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC) has announced that its annual Future Focus conference for this year has been rescheduled to 2021.

The event is being replaced with two interactive, online events including a "Virtual Drinks" which took place last week with over 50 members joining in via Zoom for conviviality hosted by Master of Ceremonies Michael Pope.

The ATAC Annual General Meeting will also be conducted in cyberspace on 03 Sep, with the theme "Pivot, Adapt, Prosper".

"We are looking forward to another engaging event which will include involvement of both our preferred partners and all members," said ATAC General Manager Michelle Emerton.

## Tandy to Qatar

**ANGUS** Tandy, formerly head of APT Travel Group's Kimberley & Outback Wilderness Adventures (**TD** 19 Dec 2019), has been appointed as Doha-based Head of Product for Discover Qatar and Qatar Airways Holidays, responsible for inbound and outbound global markets.

## FCTG launches Traveller Hub

**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has today announced the debut of a new platform aiming to provide extensive COVID-19 travel information for clients.

Particularly targeting customers of FCTG's corporate travel brands, the new Traveller Hub is supported by an artificial intelligence-powered chatbot, enabling users to seek answers to any coronavirus related travel questions via live chat.

The Hub has been developed in response to Flight Centre's recent State of the Market study (**TD** 26 Jun) which found that most companies plan to resume business travel once it is safe to do so, with the majority also revamping their travel policies to reflect increased duty-of-care considerations.

Users of the Flight Centre Traveller Hub can search by supplier category, country or region for the latest news on

border changes and restrictions, airline routes and safety procedures, hotel reopenings and hygiene measures as well as rail travel and car hire updates.

A live interactive map, delivered by travel safety specialist Sitata, highlights areas to avoid, the number of COVID-19 cases per country, recovery rates and local coronavirus restrictions.

The new hub is now live online at [fctgtravelnews.com](http://fctgtravelnews.com).

It can also be accessed within the FCM Hub, Corporate Traveller's Your.CT tech platform and the firm's Sam mobile app.

## Melb lockdown

**THE** surge in coronavirus infections in Vic has seen metropolitan Melbourne ordered into Stage 3 lockdown once again.

Residents can only leave home for shopping, medical purposes, work and study and exercise, with no visitors allowed.

Shops, markets and hairdressers are allowed to stay open, but cafes and restaurants may only offer takeaway services.

Holiday accommodation, zoos, galleries, museums and campgrounds will be closed.

Those already on holiday are allowed to complete their trip, but no new holiday travel can be undertaken from midnight tonight and visits to second residences outside the restricted areas are prohibited.

## Oklahoma + Linkd

**LINKD** Tourism has been appointed as the Australian and New Zealand representative for Oklahoma Tourism.

It's the first time Australasia has been identified as a key market for travel to the US state of Oklahoma, which also targets travellers from the UK, Ireland and German-speaking Europe.

"The investment Down Under during a time of uncertainty for the rebound of international tourism demonstrates Oklahoma's confidence in the return and growth of the resilient Australian and NZ traveller," said Linkd Tourism MD Kylee Kay.

Activity will commence immediately, led by Linkd's newly appointed Travel Development Manager Michael Cassis (**TD** 01 Jul), positioning Oklahoma for the fly-drive market as the "heart of Route 66".

Oklahoma Tourism's Todd Stallbaumer said "in this unprecedented time... we're confident our partnership with Linkd Tourism will help put Oklahoma on the map and show visitors from Down Under the wonders that await when travel to the USA resumes".

Dallas Fort Worth Airport, with direct flights from Australia, is well positioned as the base for a multi-state road trip incorporating Oklahoma, which took its first steps into Australia earlier this year as part of the Visit USA Australia Agent Roadshow in Feb.

## FJ long-haul off

**FIJI** Airways has extended the suspension of its long-haul routes, with GDS screens now indicating flights to Los Angeles, Hong Kong, Tokyo, San Francisco and Singapore are cancelled until 31 Aug.

However the carrier's plan to resume other international flights from 01 Aug, including to Australia and New Zealand, remains unchanged at present.

**VIKING**

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## PCMA survey

**THE** Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) is urging the industry to participate in a survey as part of its COVID-19 Recovery Dashboard Research initiative.

Closing this Fri, the short survey aims to give a view of the business events sector in the Asia-Pacific region, where former Melbourne Convention Bureau chief Karen Bolinger was recently appointed as PCMA's local MD.

The survey can be accessed by [CLICKING HERE](#).

## Eurostar Amsterdam

**HIGH-SPEED** Eurostar rail services between Amsterdam and London are set to debut later this year, under new agreements formalised this week (**TD** 07 Feb).

The services required existing treaties between the UK, France and Belgium to be modified to include the Netherlands, with a new four-way deal signed at a ceremony in Brussels.

The move will remove the current requirement for passengers to change trains at Brussels for immigration and security screening, with UK Border Force staff stationed in both Amsterdam and Rotterdam to carry out pre-boarding checks.

## HKG transit OK

**CATHAY** Pacific is urging travel agents with clients wanting to travel to the UK to transit via Hong Kong, which is believed to be currently the only gateway approved by the British Government as not requiring a 14-day quarantine upon arrival.

CX Country Manager Richard Jones told **Travel Daily** the carrier is currently operating four weekly flights between Sydney and Hong Kong, three of which connect smoothly through to LHR.

"This is a small revenue window of opportunity for agents with a UK expats customer base," Jones said, with the flights operating as CX100/251.

## Flanders tempts agents

**EXCLUSIVE**

**FLANDERS**, the Flemish region of Belgium represented in Australia by the Walshe Group, has today launched a new website inviting travel agents to register and undertake a series of educational modules relating to the popular tourist area.

The website, built via the **Travel Daily** Training Academy, showcases stories and videos highlighting the distinct reasons why travellers visit the renowned cities of Brussels, Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp, as well as various travel styles including cycling and battlefield tours.

"Flanders is a region dotted with gorgeous small cities providing that quintessential European experience so loved by Aussies and Kiwis," said Account Manager Australia and New Zealand Visit Flanders Sonia Holt.

"It is a place of art and culture, architecture old and new, history and remembrance, peaceful rural vistas, cycling and walking trails as well as beer, chocolates and waffles," she added.

The first two of four modules are now available providing an

introduction to Flanders as well as an overview of three of the region's major cities.

Some of the region's delicacies are also up for grabs with agents that complete each module in the running to nab Godiva chocolates or a carton of Belgian beer.

"Agents that complete all four training modules can register to receive an invitation to participate in a six-night famil trip to Flanders next year," Holt said.

To view the new website and participate, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Norfolk entry pass

**EVERY** person intending to travel to Norfolk Island must have a formal Norfolk Island Entry Pass effective immediately, with travel restricted to domestic airline passengers who identify as "low-risk travellers".

The pass must be obtained online 24-72 hours prior to flight departure, via a screening declaration which will also be used to track arrivals in the case of a COVID-19 positive case.

To apply for the pass [CLICK HERE](#).

## China travel alert

**THE** Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade last night reissued its Smartraveller advice for China, warning that authorities there have detained foreigners because they are "endangering national security".

"Australians may also be at risk of arbitrary detention," the update warns, also noting the significant reduction in direct flights between Australia and China and the requirement for 14 days mandatory quarantine upon arrival in China.

## Emerald on sale

**THE** new locally-launched Emerald Waterways (**TD** 30 Jun) has released its 2021 river cruise season for sale, with the program including a the new *Emerald Luna* which will be the line's eighth vessel in Europe.

All 2021 river cruise bookings now include Emerald's Deposit Protection Plan as well as a reduced deposit of \$500 per person, with the itineraries detailed in a new 160-page brochure which is available at [evergreentours.com.au](http://evergreentours.com.au).

## EY resumptions

**ETIHAD** Airways has announced plans to operate flights to 58 destinations worldwide throughout Jul and Aug, subject to the lifting of international restrictions and the re-opening of individual markets.

The routes will include major gateways in the Middle East, North America, Europe, Asia and Australia, with a wider network and increased frequencies to Melbourne and Sydney locally.

European ports served will include Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Belgrade, Brussels, Dublin, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Geneva, Istanbul, London Heathrow, Madrid, Manchester, Milan, Moscow, Munich, Paris, Rome and Zurich, the carrier said.

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## Hurtigruten expands

**THE** first cruise line to recommence ocean sailings since the COVID-19 suspension, Hurtigruten, has introduced a new range of itineraries in the British Isles from Sep.

Sailing on board the battery hybrid powered *Roald Amundsen*, voyages will depart from Portsmouth on 02 Sep, Liverpool on 07 Sep & Glasgow on 12 Sep, with expeditions designed to take passengers off the usual routes to destinations such as the Isles of Scilly, Fowey, Rathlin Island, Fortwilliam, Oban and Waterford.

The line also revealed it plans to have 14 of its 16 vessels back in operation by the end of Sep as part of its recovery strategy.

For more info on the British Isles itineraries, call 1300 322 062.

## International drop off

**INTERNATIONAL** visitation to Australia decreased by 8.1 million travellers for the year ending 31 Mar, according to the latest figures released by Tourism Research Australia.

The 6% drop is primarily attributed to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Mar, as well as the bushfires earlier in the year, with monthly estimates from the report showing a sharp 25% decrease in Feb, as well as a sizable 60% fall in Mar.

The report also showed that tourism spend took a major hit, declining by \$41.5 billion (6%) during the 12-month period, with major declines from Asian source markets doing the most damage to the local tourism sector.

China represented the sharpest decline, dwindling in visitation by close to 20% and spend by 15%, while neighbouring Korea was close behind falling 15% in visitation, followed by Taiwan (-12%) and Malaysia (-9%).

Historical markets also saw

moderate drops in visits, with tourists from the UK and the US both falling by 5%.

No Australian state or territory was immune to the grim visitor trend, with NSW suffering the largest drop in international travellers of 65% for Mar, while the least affected state during the month was Western Australia which saw its visitation halved.

Australian Tourism Industry Council Executive Director Simon Westaway said the gloomy figures showed the sector needed more government policy and less "sympathy" to ensure tourism businesses survive the crisis.

The only bright spot for the industry was the domestic tourism figures, which showed overnight spend jumped by 6% for the year ending Mar when compared to the previous year.

## Kids go virtual

**ANDBEYOND** has remodelled its WILDchild program so that kids can participate in the fun of a safari holiday from home.

Prices start at US\$20 per link, which accommodates up to three children, with sessions covering how to bake campfire bread & making plaster casts from "wild animals" in the backyard.

To register for a spot on the WILDchild program, [CLICK HERE](#).

## RJ COVID flexible

**ROYAL** Jordanian Airlines (RJ) says date change penalty fees will be waived for any cancelled flights between 17 Mar and 31 Jul if they are due to airport closures.

Passengers can request to revalidate their tickets on any date before 31 Dec, so long as the booking is rescheduled on or before 31 Jul 2020.

RJ customers can also request a travel voucher valid for two years from the day of issue or a refundable voucher valid for one year from the date of issue.

## Window Seat

**THERE'S** been a lot of complaining about airline refunds in recent months, but one Aussie passenger was smiling all the way to the bank.

Jessica Tam was awaiting a refund from Qatar Airways after her Business class flight from Jakarta to London was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The fare was about \$2,800, so imagine her surprise when she checked her credit card statement and found her available balance was more than \$28 million.

Tam posted a picture of the overpayment on the Australian Frequent Flyer Forum, asking "can anyone suggest a small country I should purchase?"

Unfortunately she didn't have time to plunk down the plastic on a new private jet or a yacht before the massive over-credit was reversed by the bank.

It turns out the error occurred because the original transaction was for 28,179,000 Indonesian Rupiah, while the refund was processed in Australian dollars.

She followed up with another post later on, advising "Sad news everyone...my bank has decided to take close on \$30 million from my account".

## Sri Lanka training

**THE** Travel Concierge Sri Lanka is offering Australian agents the chance to participate in one-on-one online training workshops conducted by Sri Lankan experts.

The personalised information sessions represent a move away from the traditional webinar model for the company, which Executive Director Laahiru Jayamanne believes will increase learning and interactivity.

Sessions will be held throughout Jul and Aug and can be scheduled between 12.30pm and 8.30pm (AEST) - email [HERE](#) for details.

## Qantas rebukes Rex

**A QANTASLINK** spokesperson has accused Regional Express (Rex) of being "uncomfortable about facing competition", following the regional airline's demanding of suspension of QF's government aid (**TD** yesterday).

Rex's proposition came with accusations of "anti-competitive and predatory behaviour" from Qantas due to its new Orange routes, which QF rebuked, pointing out Rex's own recent expansion on key Qantas routes.

**MEANWHILE** Regional Express has advised of "strong interest" from financiers interested in providing funding for its proposed jet operations on the key "Golden Triangle" routes between Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane (**TD** 29 Jun), which are targeted for launch on 01 Mar 2021 with the current recruitment of "experienced industry specialists".



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Travel Daily

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AMID THE DOOM  
AND GLOOM?**

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## HK Express pushed

**BUDGET** carrier Hong Kong Express Airways has pushed back its resumption of flights to Aug due to ongoing travel restrictions imposed by APAC governments.

The low-cost airline first postponed services to Apr, which was later extended until Jul, before the latest announcement.

Customers booked on any of its flights may change travel dates or route, as well as apply for a credit or request a refund.

## Mardi Gras delayed

**CARNIVAL** Cruise Line has revised its delivery date for *Carnival Mardi Gras*, with the first revenue sailing of the ship now pushed back to 14 Nov.

The ship's first eight sailings, initially scheduled to begin 31 Aug, have all been cancelled, with the new schedule seeing Carnival take delivery of the vessel in late Oct, with its first voyage to depart from Port Canaveral on 14 Nov.

"While we had hoped to make up construction time on *Mardi Gras*...it's clear we will need extra time to complete this ship," said President Christine Duffy.

## Tripadvisor raising

**ONLINE** travel company Tripadvisor has announced an offering of US\$500 million in senior notes, with the business stating it intends to use the proceeds for "corporate purposes".

The notes will be senior unsecured obligations of Tripadvisor and will be guaranteed by each of its domestic subsidiaries.

## BCEC green light

**THE** Queensland Government has given the green light to reopen the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC).

Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk said events would kick off in Aug, with the state's Treasurer Cameron Dick saying Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre had received approval from Queensland Health to resume operations under the Site-Specific COVID-Safe Plan.

"Only a few months ago, the Convention Centre was being considered as an emergency overflow venue if required during the pandemic," he said.

## Swiss Million Stars opening



**SWITZERLAND** Tourism has launched the Million Stars Hotel, following the recent reopening of the country's borders.

The initiative features 50 "rooms" around Switzerland offering private and unobstructed views of the night skies in a series of unique locations.

The rooms feature views of the country's famous mountains, lakes, rivers, countryside and cities, in accommodation such as gondolas, bubble tents, pods, tree tents, huts, exposed beds, and rooftops.

A portion of the rooms are situated along the Grand Tour of Switzerland, with the project also aiming to encourage visitors to explore the lesser-known areas of the European country.

Ranging from \$122 to \$1,233 per night per couple, all stays include breakfast and are available until the end of Oct.

The Million Stars Hotel will be open for booking again in the northern summer of 2021.

**CLICK HERE** for more info.

**Pictured:** Wiesenlodge.

## 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).



Located in Puglia's historic district, the new **Paragon 700 Boutique Hotel and Spa** is being billed as perfect for culturally minded travellers. Featuring a sister beach club, P-Beach, the hotel's team is on hand to arrange tailor-made experiences for guests,

such as voyages on the accommodation's private boat, wine tastings, motorcycle tours and cooking classes. The hotel will also play host to events throughout the year, such as art classes and open-air cinemas.



**Rosewood Doha**, in Lusail City, is set to open in Qatar in 2022, as the newest addition to the region's Marina District skyline. The five-star hotel will be a mixed-use development, based on underwater forms, specifically the local coral formations

found around Doha. The organic architectural design approach is aimed at being respectful of the site and the surrounding waters of the Arabian Gulf.

## Pax flight concerns

**A TRAVELLER** survey conducted by the International Air Transport Association reveals the appetite for travel is being adversely impacted by fears of catching COVID-19 while in the air.

Around 58% of those surveyed said they have avoided air travel, with 33% suggesting that they will avoid travel in future as a continued measure to reduce the risk of catching coronavirus.

At the airport, travellers' top three concerns were being in a crowded bus or train on the way to the aircraft (59%), security, border control or boarding (42%) and using airport facilities (38%).

Almost two-thirds were also concerned about sitting next to someone who might be infected.

## Crystal solo deals

**SOLO** travellers can enjoy a reduced single supplement aboard select *Crystal Symphony* sailings with Crystal Cruises.

Solo supplements of just 105% will apply to six abbreviated segments of longer itineraries, sailing in Nov and Dec 2020, as well as Jan and Feb 2021.

The trips range from seven to 10 nights in length, and explore destinations such as Abu Dhabi, Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Oman, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

The reduced solo rates for the select 2020 voyages are combinable with the Crystal Confidence program, which offers reduced deposits of just \$100 and extended final payment deadlines of 60 days prior to sailing.



## 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.

T	O	F
M	Y	A
L	R	I

Good – 21 words  
Very good – 32 words  
Excellent – 42 words

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

## Where in the world?



**THERE** are many iconic waterfalls around the world, famous for different reasons. These falls are some of the best known in this country, and are a


day trip away from the nation's capital. Do you know where in the world these are found? Check tomorrow for the answer.

### ANSWERS 07 JUL

Pub quiz: 1 Three, 2 United Airlines and American Airlines, 3 Mogadishu, 4 Copenhagen, 5 1990, 6 The monorail, 7 Brazil, 8 SpaceX, 9 The Millennium Wheel, 10 The 1930s (1936), 11 Helsinki (hell + sink + e [note])

Whose flag is this: Russia

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



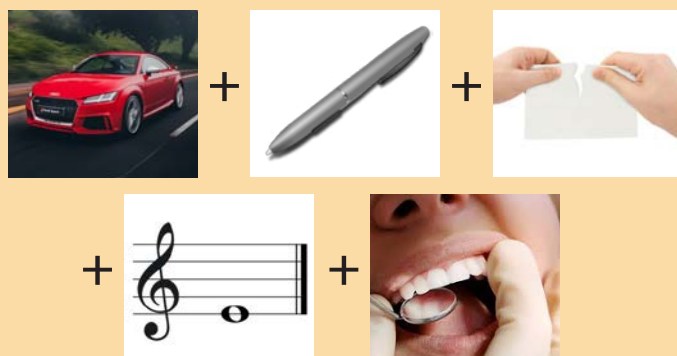
*In these times we need a drink!*

Send us your cocktail recipes for our weekly feature.

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## Pub quiz

- What is the internet domain name for Chile?
- What have some residents of Milan been doing in the last month to feel like they are at the beach during the current period of travel restrictions?
- Which airline is the flag carrier of Ireland?
- If a Spanish person were to offer you some pez, what are they giving you?
- Which famous tourist landmark is older, the Leaning Tower of Pisa or The Eiffel Tower?
- What is the capital of New Zealand?
- Which is colder, the South Pole or the North Pole?
- Which US state is Quentin Tarantino's movie *Pulp Fiction* set in?
- Which famous bridge do the family in the sitcom *Full House* drive over during the opening credits of the show?
- Which city was former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott born in?
- Which Australian region does this collection of pictures spell?



## Funnies Flashback



**WE'VE** trawled through the **TD** Window Seat archives to give you blast from the past. Here's some gems from 06 Mar 20212:

**IMMIGRATION** officials in the UK have launched a probe after passport office staff arbitrarily decided that acting was "not a proper job".

According to the *London Daily Telegraph*, an application was rejected after it had been countersigned by Michael Sheldon, who is appearing in the West End stage show *Three Days in May*.

Sheldon, who signed the form on behalf of his daughter's boyfriend, raised the matter with the Actor's Equity union group which in turn wrote to UK Home Secretary, Theresa May.

The Identity and Passport Service responded by confirming it was undertaking an investigation "and looking at whether further staff training is required".

## Dubai kicks major goal



**FRENCH** soccer club Lyon played their first game following the commencement of its sponsorship with Emirates (**TD** 07 Feb) on the weekend, donning special one-off "Dubai is Open" jerseys to mark the occasion.

The shirts were created to help raise awareness for Dubai's re-opening tourism sector, which officially did so yesterday.

The Dubai is Open message will also be visible in media tie-ins that Emirates has in place with

other European soccer teams Arsenal and Real Madrid.

For the record, the exhibition match against Nice was won by Lyon 1-0, with midfielder Houssem Aouar **pictured** scoring the winning goal.

## New Gallipoli book

**MAT** McLachlan Battlefield Tours (MMBT) has diversified its publishing arm Living History with the launch of a new book, *The Gallipoli Evacuation*, by MMBT battlefield guide Peter Hart.

The book details the untold true story of the ANZAC's & Allies' escape from the Gallipoli Peninsula, billed as a life or death gamble which concluded the nine-month Gallipoli campaign.

The book is available for pre-order now for delivery in Sep, with the soft-cover version \$35.99 plus postage and handling, and the e-book \$16.99.

All orders made by 31 Jul will receive an exclusive audio conversation with Peter Hart.

**CLICK HERE** for more details.

## SLH guidelines

**SMALL** Luxury Hotels of the World (SLH) has announced a Stay Small, Stay Safe initiative, with its property network preparing to welcome back travellers.

The initiative offers enhanced health and safety guidelines for all 520 member hotels across 90 countries, and also helps to safeguard these standards with the backing of the Global Bio-Risk Advisory Council.

Nearly 230 of SLH's member hotels have now re-opened.

**Catch up on the news of the week**

**CLICK HERE TO LISTEN**

## Genting certified

**GENTING** Hong Kong's *Explorer Dream* is the first cruise ship to receive the Certification in Infection Prevention for the Maritime industry (CIP-M) from independent risk management company DNV GL.

The CIP-M is based on stringent healthcare foundation and expertise in infection risk management, used in the accreditation and certification of more than 630 hospitals.

*Dream Cruises* recently announced *Explorer Dream* will restart operations in Taiwan.

## Tourism partnership

**THE** NSW-based World Tourism Association for Culture and Heritage, established by former Pacific Asia Travel Association director Chris Flynn, has announced an alliance with the World Association for Hospitality & Tourism Education & Training.

Flynn said the pact would create a "wealth of opportunities for our most treasured tourism attractions," with the COVID-19 pandemic creating a unique opportunity to balance the protection of these assets with ever-growing tourist demand.

## WIN A CRUISE FOR 2

This month Travel Daily has partnered with Celebrity Cruises to give you the chance to WIN a free cruise for two people onboard *Celebrity Solstice* departing Sydney.

**In 25 words or less, tell us your favourite cruise port along the East Coast of Australia and why, and you could WIN!**

Email [celebritycomp@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:celebritycomp@traveldaily.com.au) to enter.





**Flanders**  
State of the Art



# WHERE IN THE WORLD IS FLANDERS?

**Flanders is the Dutch speaking region of Belgium,  
located in the heart of central Europe.**

Home to the beautiful medieval art cities of Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp, the historic remembrance trail of Flanders Fields, the world's best beer (sorry, not sorry Germany), the world's best chocolates (sorry, not sorry Switzerland) and the most tenacious cycling heritage on earth (we have Eddy Merckx – no apology needed)!

**Find out more about the fabulous region of Flanders with training modules designed specifically for the travel trade in Australia and New Zealand.**

**The first two modules are available now;**

- 1 Introduction to Flanders (including Brussels)
- 2 Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp

The remaining two modules will be released in a fortnight.

**For each module a lucky winner will be confronted by the difficult choice between Belgian chocolate or beer.**

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TO DISCOVER  
FLANDERS**

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