



Last call for donuts

EXCITEMENT continues to build in the lead-up to International Donut Day this Fri, with entries still being accepted in our fabulous Donut Ditty competition.

We've received scores of poems, limericks, odes, ballads and even a haiku or two, but you're still in with a chance if you can send through your effort by close of business today.

The overall winner, will receive a special donut delivery - entries to donuts@traveldaily.com.au.

PR writing course

SPACES are still available for an upcoming writing course to be hosted on 19 Jun by travel writer Rob McFarland.

Aimed at tourism marketers, operators and PR executives, the half-day workshop covers press release writing and story pitching.

Limited to a maximum of 10 the course costs \$399pp - see robmcfarland.org.

Virgin shortlist revealed

THE final two bidders for Virgin Australia have less than two weeks to make binding offers for the carrier, with VA Administrator Vaughan Strawbridge from Deloitte anticipating naming the final bidder by the end of Jun.

Bain Capital and Cyrus Capital Partners have been selected as preferred bidders from five non-binding indicative proposals lodged on Fri (**TD** breaking news).

Strawbridge said that the finalists were "well-funded, have deep aviation experience, and they see real value in the business and its future".

Bain Capital, which is being advised by former Jetstar CEO Jayne Hrdlicka, has flagged its intentions to relaunch VA as a hybrid carrier "in the mould of the old Virgin Blue" but with airport lounges, and a regional and domestic network initially.

Cyrus has ties to Virgin founder

Sir Richard Branson, having been one of the original backers of Virgin America and also collaborating in the Connect Airways consortium which took over the now defunct Flybe just over 12 months ago.

Strawbridge said the strong interest coming from all parties had generated the competitive tension Deloitte had sought.

"We are in a strong place when it comes to delivering the best possible commercial outcome for all creditors, and to see a strong and sustainable Virgin Australia emerge from this process."

Pitcairn goes virtual

PITCAIRN Islands Tourism has created a virtual tour to give travellers a taste of Pitcairn while COVID-19 restrictions are in place.

Featuring the International Dark Sky Sanctuary, marine reserve and more, see visitpitcairn.pn.

EXP tech deal

LISTED activities company Experience Co (EXP) has sealed a deal with Queenstown-based IBIS Technology as the tourism business systems software provider for EXP's skydiving operations in Australia and NZ.

CEO John O'Sullivan said the move was a sign of confidence in the post COVID-19 tourism sector recovery, adding, "now is the time to reconsider how we are operating our businesses to both streamline operations and improve the holistic experience of the customer with our brands".

IBIS systems will be implemented this winter giving staff time to adapt to the new platform before traveller numbers begin to climb to the "new normal," he said.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news including our PUZZLES.

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Royal cans Canada and Alaska

ROYAL Caribbean Cruises has confirmed the extension of Canada's ban on pax cruise shipping until 31 Oct (**TD** yesterday) means all of its 2020 sailings to Canada, Alaska & New England will no longer proceed.

A spokesperson said the company was working with public health agencies and governments to ensure a safe return to service "and look forward to setting sail from and to these destinations next year".

MEANWHILE P&O Cruises UK has also confirmed the extension of its global operations pause up to and including 15 Oct.

All guests booked on newly cancelled sailings will receive a 125% future cruise credit, with P&O UK allowing this to be redeemed online.

The credit is fully transferrable and can be used for any P&O UK cruise through to Dec 2021.

Canberra flights back on

CANBERRA Airport has confirmed that passengers are now able to fly without restriction between Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne, as COVID-19 measures continue to ease.

CBR Head of Aviation Michael Thomson said the airport was open for business, "and we look forward to the airlines increasing the number of flights they have on offer in the coming weeks".

Thomson confirmed that high levels of hygiene were being maintained, including sanitiser stations, social distancing, touchless entry to carparks and the terminal, and temperature screening at security checkpoints.

"Travel to Brisbane is also permitted from Canberra Airport if you obtain permission from the Queensland Government, and we hope to be able to open up travel to and from South Australia and Tasmania in the near future,"

Thomson added.

There's speculation that authorities in SA may significantly ease restrictions early next month to allow travel to Canberra in time for the school holidays.

MEANWHILE the Tasmanian Government yesterday brought forward the lifting of its Stage 2 COVID-19 restrictions to this Fri, allowing hotels to reopen but continuing to mandate a 14-day self-quarantine on arrival.

New New Cal hub

NEW Caledonia Tourism is showcasing the destination through a new "virtual hub" of videos and inspirational imagery.

Relaxing music videos, soothing views of New Caledonia landscapes and a 360 degree adrenaline-pumping skydiving video experience are on offer, with new content added on a regular basis.

See newcaledonia.travel.

Cyprus to pay for COVID-19 treatment

THE limited reopening of Cyprus to tourists will see the island's government cover the expenses of any visitors who test positive to coronavirus over the summer.

A plan laying out the revival of the Cypriot tourism sector confirms that the government "is committed to taking care of all travellers who test positive during their stay, as well as their families and close contacts.

"The government will cover the cost of lodging, food, drink and medication...the traveller will only need to bear the cost of their airport transfer and repatriation flight," the policy states.

Restrictions on flights to Cyprus will ease from 09 Jun but visitors, initially from a list of 13 "low-risk" countries, must have tested negative for COVID-19 within 72 hours of their travel.

NCL to add filters

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has released details of a new "SAIL SAFE" health and safety program which involves stringent protocols for post COVID-19 cruising.

The evolving program includes the installation of new HEPA medical grade air filters on ships, enhanced screening and sanitation measures, social distancing, and boosted medical resources on board including COVID-19 testing facilities.

NCL is also partnering with local operators and destinations to ensure safety measures extend shoreside, meaning some itineraries may change - details in today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

Air NZ Apr slump

AIR New Zealand carried just 15,000 passengers in Apr, with the carrier's monthly traffic statistics indicating the COVID-19 pandemic pushed the figure down 98.8% versus last year.

And despite only operating skeleton services, even those flights were just a quarter full, with a load factor of 25.8%.

TTIH webinars

THIS week The Travel Industry Hub (TTIH) is continuing its ongoing quest to keep everyone's spirits up, with Survive and Revive webinars including a presentation aptly titled "Making Money in Travel" scheduled for 1pm AEST today courtesy of Simon Bernardi from Australia & Beyond Holidays.

Tomorrow at 11am Ponant's Craig Farrell will present on expectations for a possible return of expedition cruising, followed by a 1pm session from World Resorts of Distinction.

On Fri at 1pm communications expert Andrea Plawutsky will advise on how to let the industry know about things you're doing to protect and support clients, and then another week wraps up with the regular Travel Industry Pub from 6pm until late.

See thetravelindustryhub.com.

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Abu Dhabi



Uber Rent launches in Oz

COINCIDING with the return of intrastate travel in Australia, Uber has launched a “world first” feature on its app that allows users to rent vehicles to service regional holiday plans.

Uber Rent, which does not come with a driver, will be available to 50% of Brisbane-based users from today, with 50% of subscribers across the Gold Coast, Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide to be offered the new service from next week.

Uber has partnered with the Cartrawler search engine to provide a range of car rental options from major brands such as Hertz and Thrifty, available across various pickup locations.

“While many Australians will drive to a wine region, down the coast or explore the mountains in their own car - not everyone has access to their own private vehicle,” said Uber Australia and

New Zealand GM Dom Taylor.

“At Uber we believe you should always be able to get around, even if you don’t own your own car, and Uber Rent is one more way of helping people do just that,” he added.

Users who opt to use the service will also earn 10% of the cost back in Uber credits on the first rental, as well as Uber rewards points for subsequent rental trips.

To access Uber Rent, users will need to update their app to the latest version to find out if they have been selected.

Ponant education

PONANT is conducting a second series of lectures via its Facebook page each Thu this month at 5pm AEST, with the latest series focusing on the remote Sub-Antarctic Islands of New Zealand and Australia.

Lectures will be accessed [HERE](#).

ASTW appoints

THE Australian Society of Travel Writers (ASTW) has appointed The Association Specialists (TAS) as its new secretariat.

The move follows the termination by mutual consent of incumbent Justine White (**TD** 27 Apr) amid upheaval within the organisation after the resignation of five committee members.

“We are really looking forward to working with the team at TAS during these unprecedented COVID-19 times and are confident this partnership will aid growing the society and strengthening our position as the leading industry authority into the future,” said ASTW President Elisa Elwin.

Whitsundays \$99

ALLIANCE Airlines is offering fares starting from \$99 one-way departing Brisbane from 22 Jun for the Whitsundays.

Four weekly flights will operate - details at allianceairlines.com.au.

Marriott China open

MARRIOTT International has confirmed the reopening of all of its properties in China, with CEO Arne Sorenson telling an investor conference in New York that occupancy rates there were now sitting at around 40%, up from just 7% in Feb this year.

Sorenson also said occupancy across its US hotel portfolio had seen a “meaningful improvement” to about 20%, but warned there was still a “long road ahead” before the industry returns to normal operations.

A-ROSA Jun start

A-ROSA River Cruises has announced it will resume sailings on the Portuguese Douro river from 17 Jun as 31 countries in Europe start lifting restrictions.

Voyages on the Rhine and the Danube are scheduled to follow on 19 and 20 Jun, while French cruises are flagged to recommence from Jul.

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Lay-by agent boosts presence

PLAY Travel, the joint venture between ASX-listed Afterpay and LayAway Travel (**TD** 18 Apr 2019), has ramped up an awareness campaign in the hope of meeting demand for budget-constrained post-coronavirus travel.

The company allows travellers to book now and pay in weekly instalments, with CEO Andrew Paykel saying “the market is ready for a new OTA that offers something unique to consumers”.

“From our research we know that 74% of people surveyed would prefer to book holidays with payment plans over credit and debit cards,” he said.

10 Travlr campaign

THE Living Room’s Barry Du Bois is fronting a new “Safe Travels” campaign from 10 Travlr featuring curated offers for daycations, staycations and nano breaks - see it at traveldaily.com.au/videos.

Development is continuing on the Play Travel platform, which promises enhancements by the end of 2020 which will offer users the ability to curate an itinerary that not only meets their budget but also allows them to bundle flights, accommodation and experiences.

The company recently appointed former TripAdvisor, Keith Prowse, Helloworld and Adventure World executive Dan Penner as its Head of Product and Partnerships (**TD** 07 May).

Previously under a different URL pickpayplay.com.au, ATAS-accredited Play Travel has now relaunched at playtravel.com.au after a successful 12 month trial.

The investment remains supported by Afterpay, with the model tweaked to allow travellers to pay off trips in weekly instalments rather than fortnightly, up to 12 months prior to departure.

ATAS cancellations

NEXUS Holidays (ABN 341 248 853 56) is no longer a participant in the AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme, with the company terminated a month ago due to a breach of s2.5 (d) of the ATAS Charter, which relates to the “fit and proper person” provisions of the scheme.

Other cancelled participants include Fly Odyssey Australia (ABN 592 708 025 46), Westar Holiday (ABN 726 126 034 51) and Exmouth Escape Tours (ABN 339 667 854 80), all of which failed to renew their participation.

CX set for growth

CATHAY Pacific has extended its interim schedule through until late next month, with GDS screens indicating the addition of more CX frequencies to various ports including boosting Hong Kong-Sydney and Hong Kong-London Heathrow flights to daily effective from 20 Jul.



Window Seat

WHEN you gotta go, you gotta go, but not straight away according to the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), which is advocating for “limited access” to toilets on flights to combat COVID-19.

Where possible, the ICAO suggests one toilet should be set aside for use by cabin crew only, while passengers should use a single designated lavatory based on seat allocation.

If the new regulations end up going ahead, “wee” feel a limit on tea and coffee might also be needed to prevent an unwanted bladder explosion.



Love donuts?

Travel Daily

So do we! Send us your donut poem, song or ditty to win.

In celebration of International Donut Day on 5 June, the best donut ditty will be read out on our podcast weekly and the best overall will win themselves some of the real delicious deal.

Send your entries to donuts@traveldaily.com.au



The Eye of the Tower



ICONIC Sydney tourist attraction, The Sydney Tower Eye, will reopen to the public on Thu 04 Jun following the Australian Government's recent easing of COVID-19 restrictions.

The tower's outdoor adventure SKYWALK will also be available to experience from 06 Jun, however limited capacities and walks will be available each day.

The attraction's management company, Merlin Entertainments, said that the re-opening would also see several safety measures implemented to protect the health of visitors, including cashless operations, protective clothing for all staff, the provision

of spatial separation markings, installing hygiene screens, as well as enhanced cleaning regimes.

"We can't wait for guests to return to Sydney Tower Eye where they can see as far as the Blue Mountains from Sydney's ultimate viewpoint, with 360° views, 250 metres above the city streets," said Sydney Tower Eye General Manager Dave Boyd.

"Our team has also been working really hard behind the scenes to ensure the attraction is a safe and fun place for families to visit," he added.

Visitors are requested to book in advance so that the attraction can manage numbers effectively.

Qld camping opens

CAMPING grounds located beside state-owned dams have reopened across Queensland as part of stage two easing of restrictions.

Queenslanders can now camp at a range of lakes and weirs as far north as Tinaroo Dam or Lake Moogerah in the south-east, with Qld Natural Resources Minister Anthony Lynham declaring the move is integral to restoring the state's battered tourism sector.

"The Government wants to support tourism through Qld's recovery plan...and camping holidays are a terrific way to support tourism," Lynham said.

NT Games deferred

THE Northern Territory Government has announced that the Alice Springs Masters Games and Arafura Games have been deferred until 2022 and 2023 respectively due to the impact of the global pandemic.

The major sporting fixtures rely heavily on the participation of interstate and int'l athletes, a factor the government said made it "impossible to arrange either event to a satisfactory level".

"To say we are disappointed to have had to make this decision is an understatement," said NT's Minister for the Arafura Games Natasha Fyles.



GC events future

THE Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) is hoping 2021 and 2022 will be good years for the sector after the COVID-19 downturn.

New figures released by the venue show the events industry is poised to rebound next year from a raft of cancellations in 2020, with up to 90% of events having re-signed for 2021.

Conferences to be rebooted for next year include the Australian Cotton Conference and the International Eco Summit, with GCCEC hoping for certainty on border re-openings so this year's spring and summer bookings can go ahead.

In positive news, the International Society for Eye Research booked its conference at GCCEC for 2022, which will generate 3,800 visitor nights and inject more than \$2.4 million into the economy, with GCCEC working closely with industry partners to secure the event. More details in Tue's **BEN**.

Lux Esc positivity

NEW domestic deals sales by Luxury Escapes has increased more than three times in May compared to Apr, the deals platform told **Travel Daily**.

Lead-in time for Australian customers, which measures the time between transaction and check-in date, had more than halved by end of May from what it was in mid-Apr, with the previous week of domestic intrastate deal traffic also up 80% on the long-term average.

"It's been a very difficult few months for the travel industry and we're not immune to that, but our team has handled it pretty well and managed to secure the business well enough to keep the wheels turning over," said Chief Executive Officer Cameron Holland.

"We've got plenty of runway and a good supportive board".

Luxury Escapes has also seen an increase in average order value, as well as in customers booking travel between states.

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.



Jumeirah Al Naseem in Dubai has become the first hotel in the world to receive Bureau Veritas' prestigious "Safeguard" label. The achievement means the five-star resort has met stringent health, safety and hygiene standards, as defined by one of the global leaders in testing, inspection and certification.



An expansion of **Crystalbrook Lodge**, located in the Mareeba Shire at the base of the Cape Yorke Peninsula, has been approved. The expansion will include one-, two-, and three-bedroom eco-villas, as well as expansive recreational facilities designed to promote "a true Outback experience".



Atzaro is set to reopen its 13 hectares of land in its tranquil and spacious rural setting on 26 Jun. To date, Ibiza has experienced very low levels of COVID-19, in contrast to the rest of Spain, and is billing itself as "perfect for nature lovers to quietly relax and restore", providing the ultimate healthy holiday getaway.

We're still hungry for recipes

Send us your meatball or mince recipe for our weekly feature.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Pub quiz

- The Palm Islands are three artificially created sand islands. Where in the world would one find them?
- Which Oceanic country has the most languages in the world at 840?
- Which small European country is the oldest in the world?
- Nicaragua is the best place on earth to view what phenomenon:
 - Blue Whales
 - Stars
 - Tidal Waves
 - The Southern Lights
- Which Cambodian landmark literally translates to 'temple city'?
- What is the capital of Canada?
- Which US State is home to both the easternmost and westernmost point in the United States?
- The expression 'Hakuna Matata' popularised by the movie *The Lion King* is in what language?
- True or False: there is a town in Norway just named 'A'?
- Which city is SUN HOOT an anagram for?
- What country is this collection of pictures spelling out?



Whose flag is this?



THIS flag was designed by the wife of the first head of government for this country. Each of the points of the star symbolise a different district or

area of the country, but they also mean the flag has the most points on a star of any national flag. Do you know whose flag it is? Check tomorrow for the answer.

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	N	R
N	C	E
E	U	O

Good – 18 words
Very good – 27 words
Excellent – 36 words

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

Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the **TD** Window Seat archives to give you blast from the past. Here's some gems from 03 Mar 2012:

WHAT'S that beeping sound?

Pilots aboard an Air France A320 en route from Paris to Tel Aviv this week panicked when they heard some "foreign noise" on board their aircraft.

According to an *Aviation Herald* report, as the plane flew through Swiss airspace the crew reported they were considering a diversion, and then four minutes later formally declared a mayday situation on board.

The flight landed safely at Basel airport about 20 minutes later, and it transpired that someone had heard a "bleeping sound" near the fifth row.

Flight attendants couldn't find anything, and concluded that "the sound was considered to originate from a bomb".

However after the plane landed a more thorough search found a Blackberry which hadn't had its reminder beep turned off.

AF described the diversion as "due to a technical incident" with pax accommodated in hotels overnight before resuming their trip yesterday.

ANSWERS 02 JUN

Pub quiz: 1 a) Empty Orchestra, 2 Japan (543), 3 Hawaii, 4 Richard Nixon (1972), 5 d) The UAE, 6 Now retired, the Concorde had a maximum speed twice the speed of sound, 7 False, 8 Lagos, Nigeria (21m people), 9 China, 10 Liechtenstein, 11 Toowoomba (two + womb + bar)

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

Where in the world: Antwerp Port House, Antwerp, Belgium

Dest GC part two

DESTINATION Gold Coast has released the second instalment of its upbeat video series, designed to prepare the ground for an anticipated influx of visitors to the region soon.

The "Let's Play Again Soon" video showcases the region's scenery, experiences, food and beverages offerings as well as all the friendly faces - check it out at traveldaily.com.au/videos.

The previous episode, titled "Thanks to You, Parents" generated more than one million YouTube views in just a week.

Chillax, peeps!

AUSTRALIAN Regional Tourism (ART) has urged patience from consumers as operators across the country adapt to the new post-COVID-19 environment.

While welcoming the early easing of restrictions, the organisation noted that for some businesses the announcements had come as a surprise - particularly for Qld operators who had been planning for a gradual resumption from 12 Jun.

ART said suppliers to hotels and cafes would be under enormous pressure to keep up with orders.

Plan your clients' next trip around a UK food festival

Find out more in the Autumn edition of *Travel & Cruise Weekly*

Travel & Cruise Weekly

Turtle Island supports locals



THE downturn of tourism in Fiji's Yasawa Islands has prompted the operator of Turtle Island to look after locals, with more than 370 families now struggling to put food on the table.

Richard Evanson, the owner of the resort, has donated \$15,000 worth of fishing and farming equipment and food supplies, as part of the island's Nacula Tikina Food Relief initiative.

Turtle Island has committed to retaining all of its staff, with more than 60 remaining on the island during the pandemic tending to the gardens and conducting maintenance to prepare for the return of their first guests.

Some of the team (pictured) also helped pack and deliver supplies to surrounding villages.

EasyJet relaunch

EUROPEAN low-cost carrier EasyJet has confirmed plans to resume flying to about 75% of its network by Aug.

The airline is allowing fee-free changes to flights within 14 days of travel for as long as travel restrictions remain in place.

About half of its 1,022 routes will operate next month, increasing to three quarters in Aug, but frequencies will be significantly down.

The planned resumptions aim to allow Britons to take summer holidays, despite current restrictions mandating 14 day quarantine upon their return.

Hong Kong alert

THE Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade today issued a Smartraveller update warning of an increased possibility of demonstrations in Hong Kong over the coming days.

"Some could turn into violent clashes...if there are signs of disorder, move away quickly to a safe place," the update warns, with a "Do not Travel" advisory still in place for the destination.

SEA LIFE SC reopen

SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast Aquarium is ready for guests to "waddle back in" when it reopens its doors to the public tomorrow.

Industry-leading health and safety measures are now in place, along with a 20% discount on admission as well as for the Penguin Encounter experience.



Build an A-ROSA Ship & Win a 7-night European River Cruise

This month Travel Daily has partnered with A-ROSA River Cruises to give you the chance to win a 7-night European river cruise.

Dreaming of the French joie de vivre, exploring medieval towns and antique treasures while enjoying culinary delights along the **RHÔNE/SAÔNE?**

To win visit A-ROSA's website www.arosa-cruises.com/au & check out which of their 12 ships operates the cruise of your dreams.

Pick your ship and use your imagination to draw, paint or build it!

Find any utensils suitable to create the A-ROSA ship that operates your favourite cruise on Rhine (Main/Moselle), Danube, Seine or Rhône.

Take a selfie with your creation send it to arosa@traveldaily.com.au. Don't forget to also tell us in 25 words or less why you chose this particular A-ROSA cruise.

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