



Not all gloom!

IN THESE difficult times the **TD** team is hoping to bring some light relief, with good news stories scattered in today's issue.

We'd love to hear more stories of how you're keeping your spirits up, and are keen to highlight how industry staff are supporting one another.

Don't forget our **FREE COVID-19** subscription offer is still available at subs.traveldaily.com.au, while our website's **C-19** Central section collates the latest supplier policies - traveldaily.com.au.

Pay what you can

THE Lambton Quay's Park Hotel in Wellington is offering stranded guests the option of simply paying what they can afford during the current health crisis.

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Massive industry job cuts

THE Australian travel and tourism sector has reacted swiftly to the government-imposed restrictions tackling the COVID-19 outbreak, with thousands of industry workers to be out of a job this week.

Social media posts indicate hundreds of travel agency staff have been laid off in the last day or so, while several major retail agency groups are believed to have closed their doors to the public, only dealing with clients via email or phone as staff are put on heavily reduced hours.

Qantas has stood down about 20,000 staff as it grounds its international fleet, and Corporate Travel Management this morning confirmed it was targeting cost reductions of at least \$10 million per month, involving some staff redundancies.

Webjet and Flight Centre shares

SME loans deferred

THE Australian Banking Association has announced a relief package for small businesses, which includes the suspension of loan repayments for six months, providing up to \$8 billion in relief for the segment.

Air NZ thanks trade

AIR New Zealand is today thanking the trade for its ongoing support as it works through this challenging time - see **page five**.

have both been suspended from trading, with reports in mainstream media yesterday indicating Webjet was seeking to raise \$150 million but was unable to find backing "at any price".

Tour operators, reeling from border closures and other impacts to operations, are being forced to lay off staff, while thousands of small and medium travel and tourism businesses are facing a catastrophic cash flow crisis.

The **Travel Daily** business has also been hard hit, but we are committed to continuing to keep the industry informed, and have produced a video message of support which can be viewed at traveldaily.com.au/videos.

SLK makes changes

SEALINK Travel Group has suspended its FY2020 earnings guidance as it cuts costs across its tourism-related businesses.

These changes include the suspension of sightseeing cruise operations on Sydney Harbour and the Murray River in SA, as well as scaling back some touring and marine services.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has four pages of news and photos, plus full pages from:

- Air New Zealand
- **TD** bespoke toilet paper

Oberammergau off

THE organisers of Germany's once-in-a-decade Oberammergau Passion Play have confirmed the 2020 event will not take place amid the coronavirus outbreak.

It's only the third time the massive tourist drawcard has been deferred since 1633, with officials now advising it will take place in two year's time.

"According to the current risk assessment, it is not possible to carry out the Oberammergau Passion Play," an official statement said.

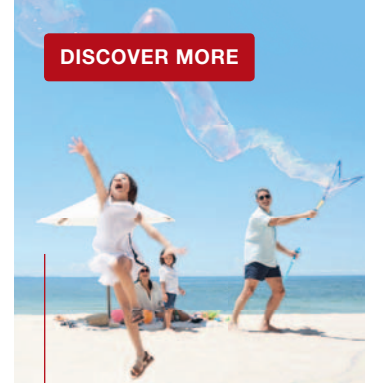
Ironically the play was first performed in the 1600s as the community battled the plague, vowing to perform the play about the life of Jesus Christ every 10 years in perpetuity so that God would put an end to the disease.

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We're all in this together

PLUS, your clients can save up to \$4,000 per couple on our Explorer Sale when they book before March 31, 2020



© Lindblad Expeditions

A cruise in the Galapagos offers wildlife encounters like nowhere on earth. Read more in the March issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read
travelBulletin

Govt lends Air NZ \$900m

THE New Zealand Government will provide Air New Zealand a standby loan facility of up to NZ\$900m as it manages the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and govt border restrictions.

The agreement will see Air New Zealand able to access the funding if its cash reserves drop below a minimal threshold, with the facility to be available to the airline for 24 months.

To be provided in two tranches, the \$600m will be an interest rate expected to be between \$7-8% per annum and the remaining \$300m will likely have a 9% per annum interest rate.

The rates will increase by 1% if Air New Zealand does not pay it off within 12 months.

Air New Zealand Chairman Therese Walsh said the airline was greatly appreciative of the

Government's support.

"The loan facility ensures that Air New Zealand can continue to play a vital role in connecting New Zealanders and our businesses with each other here at home and around the world," she said.

The airline will only be able to access the money subject to meeting certain criteria, including agreeing to an operating finance plan with the Government and other conditions.

Air New Zealand also has to cancel the 2020 interim dividend of 11 cents per share (which equates to a total of \$123 million, which was announced on 27 Feb and was set to be paid to all shareholders on 25 Mar.

Under the agreement Air New Zealand is also prohibited from paying any dividends to shareholders while it is still owing on the loan.

ACCC issues advice

THE ACCC has issued advice for businesses and consumers on their rights and obligations due to cancellation of flights, travel services or events due to the coronavirus pandemic, or if people wish to cancel their travel plans.

The body has also urged consumers to remain patient, and where possible to contact businesses by email or website, rather than by phone, reminding them these "are very complex issues" - for more, **CLICK HERE**.

MTA suspends fees

MOBILE Travel Agents (MTA) is suspending monthly membership fees for its advisors until 30 Jun.

The suspension will be reviewed at the end of the financial year.

MEANWHILE, MTAs Alycia Papadopoulou and Travelust's Kirsty Thomas-Thoeun have prepared a letter to Members of Parliament to highlight sole traders being left out of the first Government stimulus package.

CLICK HERE to read the letter.

itravel's iwonder success



THE clever team at itravel Carlingford has found an inventive way to keep clients engaged and booking whilst still keeping connected with suppliers and their representatives.

After contacting their clients who had registered for an iwonder (information) night for Israel and Jordan where the team was set to announce its 2021 Group tour with Globus, they found everyone still wanted to attend.

They decided to go ahead, and even beamed in their Globus Family of Brands rep Issy Lim up on the big screen via Facebook Messenger Video so she could present to the clients.

itravel took precautions, spacing out chairs and providing ample hand sanitiser for attendees and their hard work paid off, with everyone in attendance booking on the group tour either that night or the following morning. Great work itravel Carlingford!

Surprise TD readers

THE travel industry is struggling aplenty right now, but one extra stress none of us need is the hunt for provisions such as toilet paper.

That's why, if you head to the **back page** of today's *Travel Daily*, you'll find we've supplied a special something for those doing it (all kinds of) tough.

Meet Your Mediterranean Experts

Karen

Years in industry: 20+

Favourite Destination/s: Malta, Italy

Destinations Visited: Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Italy, Malta, Switzerland, Spain, Croatia, Slovenia, Egypt, Jordan, Israel.

Expert Tip/s: Walk as much as possible, wherever you can. Don't be afraid to get lost. You will find hidden gems where you won't find any tourists.



SUN ISLAND TOURS 1300 665 673 info@sunislandtours.com.au



We want to hear from travel agents about what support you need to help manage these difficult times the industry is currently facing.

**CLICK HERE
TO TELL US**

Travel Daily



Viva & Chimu offer

POLAR tour operators Chimu Adventures and Viva Expeditions will launch special repatriation charter flights early next week for Aussies stranded in South America in the wake of COVID-19.

The brands said they would be offering the flights to people regardless of whether they have booked with either company.

Contact australia@chimuadventures.com or info@vivaexpeditions.com to arrange a spot on the flights.

NZ shuts up shop

NEW Zealand has closed its borders to all non-New Zealand residents in an effort to contain the spread of COVID-19.

"At no time in New Zealand's history has a power like this been used, and I recognise how extraordinary it is," Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern conceded.

The ban came into effect from midnight yesterday.

Carnival steps up

CARNIVAL Corporation has offered the use of its cruise ships to serve as temporary hospitals as governments around the world continue the battle to contain the spread of COVID-19.

The generous offer includes vessels from all of its brands including Holland America Line, and P&O Cruises Australia.

Carnival said its ships are capable of being quickly provisioned to provide up to 1,000 hospital rooms that can treat patients suffering from less critical, non-COVID-19 conditions.

Survive & Revive!

SURVIVE and Revive Facebook sessions targeting the travel industry presented by *Travel Daily*, The Travel Industry Hub's (TTIH) Richard Taylor and C&M Recruitment's Melissa Schembri will now take place at 2pm today, instead of 1pm.

Register your interest [HERE](#).

Planetdwellers offer

CO-FOUNDER and co-owner of Planetdwellers Mario Paez is offering the company's desks and wi-fi to "all our travel industry friends and family, particularly those who are home-based, regardless of your branding", for free.

"You are welcome to come in, chat, vent, cry and laugh".

Quark policy update

QUARK Expeditions has made a number of policy updates designed to protect travellers and agent commissions.

The Book with Confidence & Rebook Anytime Policy is applicable to Quark's 2020 Arctic season, offering customers the ability to cancel up to 24 hours prior to their voyage start date, and rebook with 100% Future Travel Refund Credit if partial payment is received at the time of cancellation, and 120% if full payment is received.



Window Seat

IT'S all about finding the silver lining and one avid *Travel Daily* reader has done just that.

Working from home can provide a new set of challenges - and perks - with The Hotel Connection CEO Sarah Whitty facing a rather furry obstacle to getting work done.

Whitty's adorable kitty is **pictured** making the most of her being at home.



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Walshe phones

A NUMBER of Walshe Group's phone lines are currently down, affecting Air Vistara, All Nippon Airways, Delta Air Lines, Oman Air and South African Airways.

Vistara can now be contacted at 02 9054 5048, DL at 02 9054 5083, WY at 02 9054 6725 and SA at 02 9054 6860 in Sydney and 08 6119 8149 in Perth.

ANA is currently requesting guests to contact them at ausales@ana.co.jp.

New Cal pause flights

NEW Caledonia is preparing to cease all commercial flights, with the exception of those directly linking it to metropolitan France.

Smarttraveller has advised those wishing to depart the country to do so at the earliest opportunity.

Although the Australian Government advises against all international travel, those who do travel to New Caledonia will have to undergo a mandatory 14-day self-isolation period.

Rex reduces flts

REGIONAL Express (Rex) has announced reductions to its network, which will take effect from 06 Apr.

The downscale will see the airline reduce capacity by 45%, and includes the suspension of Adelaide-Port Augusta, Sydney-Armidale and Sydney-Newcastle.

The changes come with Rex appealing to the state governments for assistance "to give the regional carriers a fighting chance of seeing through the current crisis".

The airline is calling for State Governments to divert a portion of their budgets for regional airport infrastructure to help out regional carriers and urged them to follow the Federal Government by waiving fees and taxes.

Tas accom resource

TOURISM Tasmania is offering advice for accommodation providers hosting guests who are required to self-isolate - [CLICK HERE](#).

A wider guide on international arrivals into Tasmania is also available [HERE](#).

Rocky correction

GUESTS booked on cancelled Rocky Mountaineer Apr trips can use their 110% credit for 2020, 2021 or 2022 departures, but not in 2023, as reported in yesterday's *Travel Daily*.

LATAM policy

LATAM Airlines has updated its change and cancellation policy, offering those travelling from Australia to destinations with border restrictions until 31 May the opportunity to change their flight dates.

One change is allowed per booking, and there will be no charge for the fare difference, provided the origin and destination remain the same.

America travel level

THE US Department of State & Bureau of Consular Affairs has issued a global level 4 health advisory, "do not travel".

The edict advises United States citizens to avoid all international travel due to COVID-19.

WIN A CRUISE TO RUSSIA



Terms & conditions + full prize details

This month Viking is giving *Travel Daily* readers the opportunity to win a deluxe stateroom on the Waterways of the Tsars river cruise.

Explore the Waterways of the Tsars aboard *Viking Akun*. Travel from Moscow to St Petersburg in style, where you and a partner can experience Russia like never before.

To enter simply:

1) Visit Viking's Marketing Centre & download at least one file [here](#)

2) In 25 words or less, let us know what else you'd like to see on the Viking Marketing Centre

Submit your answers to viking@traveldaily.com.au along with your name, state & travel agency details

Contact agents.anz@vikingcruises.com if you need assistance setting up an account



TRAVEL SPECIALS



WELCOME to Travel Specials, *Travel Daily's* Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of, send the details to specials@traveldaily.com.au

Savings of up to \$493 per person are available with AAT Kings' Last Minute Deals on its Outback Safari. Deals are valid for set departures in Apr & May, with prices starting at \$4,433ppts for a 11-day trip from Uluru to Darwin. Further conditions apply, and for details, [CLICK HERE](#) or phone on 1300 228 546.

Boutique hotel collection Lancemore is offering special case-by-case rates at its properties in Palm Cove, Sydney, Red Hill, Werribee Park and Milaw for guests in need of a private space for stays of 14 days or more. Email sales@lancemore.com.au for more.

Book an exclusive Henschke Wine Escape at Spicers Peak Lodge, as part of the Holiday Here This Year campaign, from \$2,398 per couple for travel before 29 May. Valid for two nights. [CLICK HERE](#) for details, and to check availability.

Kids stay free this Apr at Metro Apartments Darling Harbour, with the property offering an Explore Sydney Package. The deal includes two adults and two children in a loft-style apartment from \$215 per night, for a minimum two-night stay. For package details, call 1800 11 4321.

Got a confidential tip? Contact *Travel Daily* via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or [click HERE](#)

Thank you

for your incredible efforts.
We appreciate your ongoing
support as we work through
this challenging time together.

We've got your back (side)

Print this page out on 35gsm and you'll have a couple of extra squares for when that last roll is looking empty

*#toiletpapergate
#toiletpaperpanic*

✂ Cut here


Travel Daily