





Travel Daily First with the news

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New agent video

DAVID Wright from South Australian agency Travel Prospects appears in a new long-form video posted online by South Australian Shadow Tourism Minister 7oe Bettison MP.

Wright's video explains the benefits of using an agent, why COVID-19 has been so difficult for travel agents and the importance of supporting local small businesses.

To view it **CLICK HERE**.

Air NZ Oct drops

AIR New Zealand carried less than half the passengers in Oct than in the previous period last year, according to the carrier's latest traffic report.

The airline flew just 690,000 passengers in Oct compared with 1.396 million last year following a large drop in long-haul flights in particular, which deteriorated from 172,000 passengers last year to only 7,000 in Oct.

MEANWHILE Air NZ has also today confirmed it has been awarded more international cargo flights under the International Air Freight Capacity (IAFC) scheme.

The NZ Government's IAFC program will now run through until 31 Mar 2021 and will see Air NZ operate about 55 weekly international flights going forward.

Air NZ GM Cargo Anna Palairet said it was good news both for the airline and for NZ importers and exporters wanting to get their products to key markets around the world.

Helloworld staff to return

HELLOWORLD Travel Limited (HLO) expects to welcome back all of its existing personnel in 2021, initially on a part-time basis but ultimately full-time as quickly as possible through the year.

CEO Andrew Burnes told the Helloworld Annual General Meeting this morning that there are still 1.100 people on staff (down from 1,950), most of whom have been working parttime or stood down since Mar. Burnes also noted that over 85%

Rescue funds sunk?

THE CEO of The Cairns Aquarium has been accused of misusing state government rescue funds, with an initial \$1m grant allegedly used to purchase a car and make political donations, according to the Cairns Post.

Daniel Leipnik has described the allegations as "exceptionally unfair," saying he will strenuously defend his position and that the transactions in question were appropriately declared months ago as part of an "open and transparent disclosure of all Cairns Aquarium operating costs".

He said the grant funding had only been used for essential costs to keep 50 staff employed and keep the operation afloat.

The State Govt had planned to issue the Cairns Aquarium with \$3.5 million in total rescue grants, but will now hold on to the remaining \$2.5 million pending the outcome of the investigation.

of the company's agent members are still in business and are "now starting to see green shoots with a recovery in domestic travel, trans-Tasman travel and importantly international enquiries for travel in the latter part of 2021 and into 2022".

He also said it was expected that Helloworld's retail travel agencies will experience a "very significant increase in demand in 2021," because their services will be in greater need given the complexities of travel in a post-COVID world.

Burnes added that the relative level of competition for Helloworld agents would be "dramatically reduced, given the recent announcements by some of our friendly competitors about the shrinkage of their own retail footprints in Australia and NZ".

While HLO was expecting to continue to incur losses of up to \$2 million per month at least until Mar 2021, the opening of domestic borders and also hope of some international travel bubbles could see the company close to a break-even position by the last quarter of the current financial year, Burnes said, saying he had a "renewed degree of optimism about the travel industry and about our business".

Today's issue of TD

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

ResWorld rollout

HELLOWORLD plans to expand its ResWorld in-house mid-office platform to retail leisure agents in New Zealand in 2021, as well as within the group's corporate operations on both sides of the Tasman, according to an update from CEO Andrew Burnes today.



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3c for Excite Hols creditors

CREDITORS of the collapsed Excite Holidays (*TD* 13 Jan) have been asked to complete an updated proof of debt form, with the company's Administrators advising they are now in a position to pay a "first and final dividend" to those owed money.

The current estimated payout is between 2.5 and 3 cents in the dollar, higher than the previous estimate from the Voluntary Administrators report (*TD* 11 Feb) which estimated a dividend of between 0 and 2 cents.

Creditors who have not previously lodged a formal Proof of Debt with the Deed

Finnair covers more

FINNAIR has announced it is providing free international cover for its passengers if they incur any expenses related to COVID-19.

Following a recent move by Emirates to expand its COVID insurance coverage (*TD* 24 Nov), the airline hopes the assurance will help rebuild its network, which is currently operating at close to a fifth of normal volumes.

In further health news, Finnair has partnered with private healthcare company Terveystalo to offer passengers fast access to pre-travel COVID-19 tests.

The carrier believes the tests will give peace of mind to passengers, especially those flying to destinations that require a negative COVID result to enter.

Administrators must verify their claims, with the relevant forms and all supporting documentation required to be returned to KPMG no later than 07 Dec.

Deed Administrator Phil Quinlan estimated the dividend payment will be made on or around 18 Dec.

A separate agreement was also reached with Expedia on a special refund process outside of normal policies for the cancellation of bookings impacted by COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Refund requests for prepaid Excite Holidays bookings through Expedia were required to be submitted by 30 Jun, but if not eligible any amounts not refunded became an unsecured claim against the Excite Group.

The timing of Expedia refunds is likely to be similar to the return to unsecured creditors.

MH agent portal

IN A bid to simplify the booking process for Australian and Kiwi agents, Malaysia Airlines has introduced the MH Group Portal in the local market.

The carrier said the new platform is more seamless than its predecessor, providing end-to-end automation from quoting to the ticketing phase.

Agents who register to use the new portal between now and 22 Dec will also be in with a chance to score one of six \$100 gift cards.

Fore more details, **CLICK HERE**.

NEED A DISTRACTION AMID THE DOOM AND GLOOM?

Check out our daily puzzle page.



Ormina Italian wine tours



ORMINA Tours last night hosted about 25 Sydney-based travel agents at an event at The Travel Industry Hub, showcasing an exclusive new partnership with The Grand Wine Tour in Italy.

Attendees relished the opportunity for a face-to-face event which transported them to some of the country's greatest vineyards with the help of Jessica Pianelli from the Italian Wine Society, who's pictured pouring some of the delightful vino to Louisa Bayman and Debbie Wilkinson of Ormina Tours.

The Grand Wine Tour was created by Max Coppo, who hails from an historic Italian wine making family and has developed a range of itineraries and experiences allowing travellers to enjoy exclusive hospitality dedicated to wine lovers and a luxury clientele.

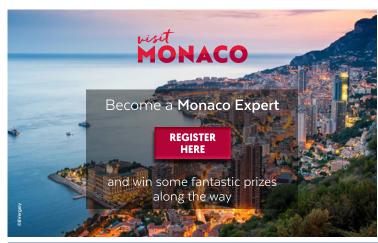
The Grand Wine Tour features leaders of the Italian world of wine, with access to the top wineries, unmissable restaurants and luxurious hotels.

Ormina offers guaranteed departures with just two passengers and a maximum of 10 in each group on tailored private itineraries, with The Grand Wine Tour partnership giving "unparalleled access to Italy's premium wineries".

The company also ensures personalised on-the-ground support via its Italy-based operations headed up by Sonia Speroni, who also appeared at the event last night via Zoom.

A "cancel for any reason" earlybird offer is providing full refunds of deposits for any 2022 bookings, valid until 31 Dec 2021.

More pics from the night at facebook.com/traveldaily.









Become a Tokyo Expert

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Viking Great Lakes

VIKING has unveiled plans to commence sailing North America's Great Lakes in 2022, visiting the US states of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, as well as the Canadian province of

Taking place aboard Viking Octantis, shore excursions are set to include scientific studies of the bird populations of the Georgian Bay in Canada, as well as explorations of the sea caves of the Apostle Islands in Wisconsin. Prices lead in from \$8,495ppts.

UK biz blocks QF

AT LEAST one UK tour operator has not taken Alan Joyce's recent 'no jab, no flight' comments (TD 24 Nov) very well, with small independent company Tradewinds announcing a total ban on offering Qantas flights to its customers.

"We feel that bodily autonomy with regard to medical intervention is a personal choice and not something to be forced onto people by businesses...we are not anti-vaccination but we are pro-choice," it said.

Not all home for Xmas

DESPITE efforts to increase flight and quarantine capacity, a Senate hearing has been told that Australia will not be able to repatriate all of the tens of thousands of its citizens who remain stranded overseas in time for Christmas.

The number of people trying to return home to Australia has nearly doubled in the last three months, according to media reports, with approximately 37,000 awaiting flights home.

The Senate's COVID-19 Committee heard the Federal Government anticipates close to 2,400 Australians will arrive home before the end of year aboard government-assisted repatriation flights, with approximately 29,000 seats to be made available on commercial flights through to Jan.

However, The Board of Airline Representatives of Australia (BARA) believes that with domestic border restrictions easing, it represents an opportunity to boost the government's projected repatriation numbers, and could go a long way to reducing the

queue of Australians who remain stranded overseas.

"BARA understands that allocating this freed-up capacity to international flights could permit over 2,000 additional international arrivals each week. making a large difference to the Australians still overseas who currently do not have any prospects of returning home before the year's end," argued the group's Executive Director Barry Abrams.

"The decision as to whether more Australians can return home prior to 31 Dec now ultimately rests with the individual state governments, who must decide if international arrivals can use the freed-up domestic quarantine capacity."

India, Britain, The Philippines, Thailand and South Africa are the top five countries with Australians registered as wanting to come home, with close to 426,000 Australians recorded as arriving home since mid-Mar.

Meanwhile there has been a 1.3% positive COVID-19 testing rate for those in hotel quarantine.



Window Seat

WITH all of the upheaval caused by the global health crisis, we tend to forget that many tourism businesses were already doing it tough with bushfires ravaging much of the country in Dec and Jan.

Despite its reputation for merciless capitalism, a special edition of the board game Monopoly has been released this week to lend assistance to regional areas impacted by COVID-19 and natural disasters.

Communities from across Australia are featured in place of squares like Mayfair and Park Lane, helping to promote their tourism cred, with \$5 from every sale going to The Australian Red Cross.







CORPORATE UPDATE

FCM benchmarking tool

FLIGHT Centre's FCM Travel Solutions operation has launched a new online "travel policy benchmarking tool" which aims to provide insights to customers wishing to see how their business travel programs compare to others around the world.

FCM Travel Solutions Australia GM Melissa Elf said "while some businesses have implemented an interim travel policy to cope with COVID-19, most will need to review this policy as travel resumes and adjust it for our new normal".

The new platform, powered by FCM's 4D Business Travel Consulting arm, aims to offer expert analysis of a travel policy's strengths as well as highlighting areas that need improving and necessary steps to be taken.

Those who complete the twominute questionnaire are then given instant feedback including "clear and expert guidance on what percentile their travel policy sits in globally," Elf said.

"We've created this powerful online tool to help businesses

QR rewards easier

QATAR Airways Privilege Club has cut the number of Qmiles required to book award flights by up to 49%.

Privilege Club's Qmiles requirements will be reduced for award flights for all members travelling with Qatar on connecting flights through Hamad International, as well as those travelling to or from Doha to Oceania, Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe.

Privilege Club members booking flexi award tickets – which require twice the number of Qmiles as award flights - will also benefit from these reductions.

QR Chief Commercial Officer Thierry Antinori said increasing the power of Qmiles was part of a wider transformation of the loyalty program.

instantly see where their focus should be, as they work to build a strong and effective travel policy for the new year and beyond."

She said the tool had been developed in response to FCM's recent Global State of the Market Study, which surveyed 2,000 customers and found the majority were reviewing their travel policies with an eye to stretching budgets and strengthening duty of care provisions.

The new tool is live now at corporate.fctg.cloud.

More meals on long road trips

AN ANALYSIS of US corporate spending on meals in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic indicates those who stayed on the road expensed a lot more F&B.

US-based data analytics firm DVI dived into the stats, noting that despite the travel industry seeing air and hotel volumes reach an all-time low this year, in Apr meal spend spiked 225% year-on-year.

At the same time, while there was an overall drop-off in rental car and mileage reimbursement expenses, car spend as a proportion of total travel costs was up 150% the same month.

The company said the data showed employees who did carry on with business trips did so by switching out air travel for car travel and were "perhaps grabbing more meals amid long road trips".

Velocity wallet drop

VIRGIN Australia has confirmed it will wind down the Velocity Global Wallet Program, which allowed members of the loyalty scheme to also store cash in ten currencies on their Velocity card.

The program launched seven years ago (TD 05 Jul 2013) as a prepaid Visa Card, but from 01 Feb usage will no longer earn Velocity points.



Hear how Hurtigruten and Silversea are planning for future travel and more in the November issue of travelBulletin.

travelBulletin



Hilton ready for events



HILTON yesterday showcased its new CleanStay protocols (TD 15 Jun) as well as the complementary EventReady program (TD 14 Jul) which implements a wide range of standards for meetings and events as COVID-19 restrictions ease and activity returns.

Heidi Kunkel, Hilton's VP Operations Australasia, highlighted the group's strong pipeline in region, with 16 new properties set to launch in the next five years including six on track for a 2021 debut.

She noted key post-coronavirus trends, with early indications that consumers are looking to trusted brands, with an increased concern for cleanliness and a corporate responsibility for the community.

Hilton Commercial Director Shaizeen Contractor presented details of the EventReady protocols including "Cleanstay room seals" which certify that meeting areas have been fully sanitised 30 minutes prior to the start of any event.

Rooms are configured to comply with distancing requirements, and the full F&B offering has been revamped around individual, sealed portions.

A new Hilton Event Ready Playbook has also been developed to guide planners when organising meetings.

Pictured at the Sydney Hilton are, from left: Heidi Kunkel; Blair Weir, Commercial Director Hilton Sydney; Shaizeen Contractor; and Johnathan Bowmaker, F&B Manager Hilton Sydney.





It's time to save ourselves

my MP had no

understanding

of what we had

gone through...

nor was he aware

of the work AFTA

has been doing

in Canberra

lobbying for the

next support

package.

OPINION

Karen Murray is a Personal Travel Manager with TravelManagers and is also the founder of Magenta Coaching.

She has penned this response to the opinion piece from

Josh Zuker earlier this week.
Got something to share? Let us
know in 400 words via email to
feedback@traveldaily.com.au.

JOSH Zuker's words this week were another reminder of the sheer depth of financial and mental despair that fellow travel business owners are legitimately Canberra, he with a bespol with a bespol to the control of the control of the with a bespol to the control of the control of the with a bespol to the control of the contr

It's not new information, we all know the only suitable description for the current state of our beloved travel industry is decimation and the only mode we are in right now is survival.

feeling.

Reading Josh's article was timely, as I had just left a group travel agent meeting with my local federal MP (see photo at top right).

Despite it being late Nov 2020, my MP had no understanding of what we had gone through despite the wide media coverage, nor was he aware of the work AFTA has been doing in Canberra lobbying for the next support package for the travel industry.

I was surprised and disappointed by his lack of insight at the beginning, however by the end of the meeting we had successfully got him up to speed and I had learnt a valuable lesson. I know I have been guilty of living in a bit of a pandemic fog, but this meeting reminded me that we all have a role to play to save ourselves. I was reminded that activism can't just be the responsibility of AFTA and even as crucial to survival as they are, monetary grants won't fix all of our short term and even long term problems.

Darren Rudd is doing an exceptional job for our industry in Canberra, he is making progress with a bespoke support package

now being formulated.

We aren't an easy industry to understand and it has required detailed insight and skilled lobbying for Darren to make a clear and compelling case.

I'm very grateful we have him representing us and I want him to stay on task and keep focussed on getting those grants approved and in the hands of agency owners who are committed to long term recovery.

Collectively

though, we have so much work to do to reposition the reputation of our industry, to rebuild future sources of short-term and long-term revenue, fee for service foundations, consumer trust, as well as codes of industry conduct to name a few - and all of this work needs to start with or without government grants in hand

We need to save ourselves, together. So while Darren is doing his job, who is interested in doing the even harder work with me?

Agents line up for support



WE ALL know the travel industry enjoys a good get-together - but we sure didn't expect to be doing it under these circumstances.

This group of Qld travel agents met up at the office of their local member Andrew Laming MP, in the Brisbane beachside suburb of Cleveland earlier this week.

The agents presented a range of proposals to help the industry out, including continuing JobKeeper at the original rate of \$1,500 per fortnight to sustain wages both for the business owners and their consultants.

They also urged the government to provide grants to help with ongoing operational costs for their businesses, which would also help with processing refunds through until Jul 2021.

Other proposals included funding for Professional Development grants to help revamp the way the travel agency businesses operate, possibly

PAL restructuring

PHILIPPINE Airlines has sought protection from its creditors, as it slashes its fleet and seeks to raise US\$500 million in new capital.

The carrier has told the *Nikkei Asian Review* it will return 20 leased aircraft and is likely to make staff cuts too.

"Philippine Airlines management and stakeholders continue to work on a comprehensive recovery and restructuring plan that will enable PAL to emerge financially stronger from the current global crisis," the carrier said in a statement.

The airline recently reported its figures for the year to 30 Sep, with revenue down over 60% mainly due to flight cancellations since Mar 2020.

charging service fees across the board to ensure incomes are protected when refunds occur.

The agents explained to Laming that they continued to operate in a negative revenue situation, with any prospective income likely to be six to eight months away.

Pictured from left are Andrew Laming MP; Naomi Thomas, Thomas Travel; Nikky Ross, Access Ireland and UK Holidays; Alysha White from MTA Travel; Karen Murray of TravelManagers; Mandi Gosper, Travel Associates; Nikki Brown, Travel Associates; and Amanda Brady, TravelManagers.

Silversea podcast

silversea Cruises has released a new episode of its culinary podcast S.A.L.T. Lab Radio, this time coming from Italy with host Adam Sachs as he visits Regaleali, a family estate in Italy.

Previous podcasts have featured unique food and wine experiences in Trieste, Albania and Lisbon - listen and subscribe at silversea.com.

Wyndham Adelaide

THE first Wyndham Grand property in Australasia was announced yesterday, in the form of a new 34-storey tower in the Adelaide CBD.

Set to open in 2024, the King William Street property is being developed by Equinox, and will feature about 350 rooms and suites along with a full array of upmarket hotel services.

The new Wyndham Grand Adelaide will have a wine bar and a rooftop restaurant which is expected to become "one of the most desirable dining destinations in the city".



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Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the TD Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 23 Apr 2014:

BIRD strikes happen from time to time, but how about a bee swarm strike?

An Allegiant Airlines plane flying from Las Vegas to Dululth in Minnesota was forced to return to McCarran International Airport after the pilot told passengers the aircraft had made contact with "thousands of bees".

The jet was forced to return to Las Vegas after the swarm clouded the windshields with many sucked into the engines. After a full cleanout, the flight resumed and eventually arrived only two hours behind schedule.

APPARENTLY humans aren't the only species hopping on the "selfie" bandwagon, with even koalas capable of a self-photo. Sony Australia undertook a unique promotion for its new QX Lens-Style camera by putting one in the control of two koalas at WILD LIFE Sydney Zoo, with two shots turning up.

The camera was positioned in a tree, with the remote function allowing the self-timer to be set off from outside the enclosure, resulting in snaps that look remarkably like a selfie. Users snapping shots from a mobile phone can receive the shots straight afterward, ready to upload onto social media.

Where in the world?



THIS horse racing track is famous for hosting an annual race named after the state that the track is located in.

The course is 2km long and the famous race run on it is often referred to as "the run for the roses" due to the winner being draped with a blanket of roses, or "the fastest two minutes in

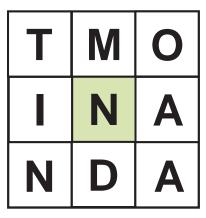
sports" due to the time the race usually lasts.

The venue was built in the 1890s, with the grandstand with its two spires (pictured) added in 1995 after the original builders ran out of funds and sold the project to a different party.

Do you know where in the world this is located?

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.



Good - 16 words Very good - 24 words Excellent - 31 words

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

ANSWERS 26 NOV

Whose flag is this: North Macedonia

Know your brands: 1 Oporto, 2 Wikipedia, 3 Suncorp, 4 Emirates

Whose animal is this: Sable antelope - Zimbabwe

Pub quiz

- 1. The Sheikh Zayed Mosque is located in which city?
- 2. Kamehameha I founded and ruled over which former kingdom?
- 3. Is the height of Uluru over or under 1km?
- 4. Luanda is the capital of which country?
- 5. Lujiazui is a district of which city, and is also known for its futuristic skyscrapers synonymous with the city's skyline?
- 6. Which American state is famous for its old-fashioned "open town meeting" style of government?
- 7. The vatu is the currency of which country?
- 8. Which city was the capital of the Spanish East Indies for over 200 years?
- 9. Burnt Pine is the largest town on what island?
- 10. What airline was founded in 1947 as KLM Interinsulair
- 11. What city is this collection of pictures spelling out?



Travel Daily

Friday 27th November 2020

Lonely walking tours

LONELY Planet has released two new guides aimed at inspiring Aussies to embark on their next domestic walking holiday.

BEST Day Walks Australia and Lonely Planet's Natural World includes over 60 strolls ranging from three hours to a full day, such as Morialta Conservation Park, Mossman Gorge, the Prince Henry Cliff Walk, Wineglass Bay, and Wreck Beach.

Lonely Planet's Natural World promotes the diversity of Australia's nature walks in places such as the Daintree National Park, the Franklin River and the Simpson Desert.

Guides retail for \$34.99 each.

EY facial biometrics

ETIHAD Airways and information technology company SITA are trialling facial biometric check-in technology for cabin crews at Abu Dhabi International.

The test phase will use facial recognition technology to identify and authenticate crew members, with the initiative to replace the current kiosk-based check-in process which requires crew to use their identity cards as a form of authentication.

It will continue until Feb and provide Etihad with data to explore future implementations of biometric technology for use in guest operations, such as check-in and boarding procedures.

St Kilda jumps for joy



IT HAS been a long wait for Victorians to enjoy the thrills of adventure tourism again, and this week many were willing to take a leap of faith that the future will be bright and enjoyable.

The team at Skydive Australia, part of Experience Co, were more than excited to capture the moment restrictions 'dropped' on its St Kilda and Great Ocean Road

dive zones, with the company now operating flights seven days a week over the region.

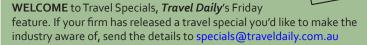
In an encouraging sign Victorians are ready to take the plunge on adventure tourism again, more than 200 adrenaline junkies have booked to skydive in the area in the next week alone.

Skydive Australia ended an almost eight-month hibernation due to the restrictions the State Government imposed to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Prices for a 15,000 ft tandem dive start from \$429 - CLICK HERE to book.

Pictured: Staff and adventure tourists begin to view Victoria in a whole new light this week.

TRAVEL SPECIALS



Savings of up to 15% are available on a range of Australia and South Pacific trips with Intrepid Travel. The cyber sale is valid for travel before 15 Dec 2021, and the deal expires 02 Dec. For more info, CLICK HERE.

South Australia's Wilpena Pound Resort in Haker is offering extra Black Fri savings. Valid for stays until 30 Nov, the deal offers a 30% discount on stays in its hotel and campgrounds, as well as in the glamping tents at Ikara Safari Camp. The offer is combinable with other specials currently available, including the Kids Eat Free deal. Quote the promo code "BLACKFRIDAY2020" at the time of booking. More details HERE.

Book general admission tickets with a three-day Hot Pass to the **Darwin** Triple Crown Supercars, with special Black Fri rates leading in from \$79. To find out more about ticket options and the program, visit www. darwinsupercars.com.au.

Moet champagne, 12 reds and two Dartington Crystal free stemless glasses are available for just \$120, delivered free, thanks to BIG4 Holiday Parks. With a recommended retail price of \$362, this offer from Laithwaite's Wine People includes a Margaret River Cabernet Merlot, a McLaren Vale Shiraz, a Lnghorne Creek Cabernet and three other goldmedal winners. Mixed and all-white cases are also available, as are a range of other bonuses - CLICK HERE for more information.

MEL push takes off

MELBOURNE Airport has announced that "now is the time" to travel as part of a new campaign created in partnership with airlines Qantas, Virgin Australia and Jetstar.

The marketing push marks the first time a major Australian airport has launched a national promotion of this kind, with the campaign to feature "evocative imagery representing destinations from around the country" in order to incentivise travel.

"The campaign's agility enables multi-partnerships with our airline customers, airports and tourism partners to support the recovery process and reassure passenger confidence in air travel," said Melbourne Airport Chief of Aviation, Shane O'Hare.

The campaign coincides with the MEL/SYD route resuming.

Oh la la, watch now

AIRCALIN and New Caledonia Tourism are inviting travel advisors to an exclusive screening of the French film La Belle Epoque at Palace Cinemas Norton Street in Sydney as part of the Alliance Français French Film Festival.

The screening is scheduled to take place on 10 Dec at 6.30pm, with all agents to receive complimentary drinks and popcorn upon arrival.

Only 44 tickets are available, and are limited to two per person - CLICK HERE to redeem.

Got a confidential tip? Contact Travel Daily via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click HERE



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