

Cruiseco, NCL to pay advance comm

CRUISECO has partnered with Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) in a major new initiative to help travel agencies navigate the financial pressures of COVID-19, allowing them to bank early commissions as they drive future cruise sales.

The move was unveiled to members of the consortium late last week, with Norwegian Cruise Line to deliver 3% upfront commission to Cruiseco agents on NCL cruises booked between 01 Oct and 31 Dec.

The incentive scheme was unveiled by Cruiseco marketing manager Adam Vance, who told **TD** "every person who is going to cruise in the next 12-24 months is sitting on an agent's database somewhere...NCL is investing in members, who in turn communicate and promote via their databases.

"Early commissions help solidify the travel agent and Cruiseco member channel," he said.

The 3% prepayment is valid right across the NCL fleet for sailings through until 2023, and includes bookings made on any of 40 Cruiseco NCL fly/cruise or stay/cruise packages, as well as all cruise only offers.

Normal commission will still be applicable to all bookings made in the normal booking/deposit/full payment timeline, and all new bookings are eligible, including cash sales and Future Cruise Credit redemptions.

RedBalloon agent platform

EXCLUSIVE

EXPERIENTIAL gifts company RedBalloon is planning to introduce a travel agent portal which would provide revenue share on bookings, Chief Executive Officer David Anderson has exclusively revealed to **TD**.

Set to debut over the next few months, RedBalloon is working to secure a number of partnerships to tie into the platform, with a view to making the company's products more accessible.

With more details to be announced shortly, the portal will provide a booking platform through which travel agents will have access to experiential product, and will receive a percentage of sales.

"Our plan is to try and give travel agents access to product they can staple into an itinerary or build an itinerary around," Anderson said.

"We are working on a number of step-change opportunities for us to get suppliers more broadly into travel agents and OTAs domestically so it's easier to access and book experiences

"Our objective here is to find a way to get product into travel agents' hands."

"There are huge membership organisations with whom we're seeking to partner with to provide more availability to our suppliers."

Anderson added revenue

shares will vary, "but will be very much in line with the rest of the market."

The industry-focused push comes as RedBalloon enjoys a rapid return to profitability and growth, after quickly consolidating during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We were about +10% through the first couple of months of this year and at the end of Mar we were -90%...one day we had about \$300 worth of revenue in the business," Anderson recalled.

"We were +30% on last year for Sep which was incredible....taking Melbourne out of the equation our growth rate for Sep was 60%."

The RedBalloon CEO hailed the company's strong balance sheet and trust in the brand from consumers as key to helping weather the coronavirus.

"With all of the Tourism Australia and Destination NSW work where they were spending lots of capital, we were able to sit within that and provide our brand as a mechanism for customers to move from that broad level of consideration to booking.

"We also pushed really hard on the at-home experiential capital which saw us get back to like-to-like by the end of Jun.

"Melbourne's still down 50% year-on-year, but what we're seeing is the other states are up hugely, particularly WA, SA and Queensland."

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news including our PUZZLE page and a full page from **Tourism Authority of Thailand**.

Crompton chat

THERE are still limited spaces available for this week's live interview with Cover-More Travel Insurance CEO Judith Crompton.

The conversation with **Travel Daily's** Bruce Piper takes place at 1pm Sydney time this Wed 14 Oct as part of our ongoing series of discussions with senior industry leaders right across the month.

The interview is being conducted in partnership with The Travel Industry Hub - register at thetravelindustryhub.com.

201 days of pain

MELBOURNE-BASED travel agent Josh Zuker has produced a video tracing the tragic trajectory of 2020 for the travel industry.

Job losses among airlines, tour operators, cruise companies and travel agencies as well as store closures are chronicled, as well as the continued lack of industry-specific support from the Government despite its effective embargo on travel stopping the industry's ability to trade.

Victoria's ongoing draconian lockdown measures and their impact are also part of the timetable - see the video at traveldaily.com.au/videos.



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\$1 million campaign

TOURISM Whitsundays, in partnership with Tourism and Events Queensland, has launched a new \$1 million tourism campaign designed to “restore visitor numbers to the region that rival pre-Cyclone Debbie figures”.

The Wonders of The Whitsundays marketing push will put ten local tourism operators in the spotlight, and be conducted in phases, firstly across Queensland and New South Wales, and then in Victoria as the state emerges from the COVID-19 spike in the coming months.

New ACA Chair

THE Australian Cruise Association (ACA) has appointed Phillip Holliday to be its interim Executive Committee Chairman, replacing Grant Gilfillan who has been in the position for the last three years - more details are available in today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

US, Europe off travel agenda

FEDERAL Tourism Minister Simon Birmingham has poured cold water on any near-term resumption of travel to the US & Europe, yesterday saying “the prospects of opening up widespread travel with higher risk countries will remain very reliant on effective vaccination or other major breakthroughs in the management of COVID”.

Birmingham's comments were echoed on TV this morning by Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who remarked that “you only need to look at what's happening in Europe at the moment where they're going through a horrific further wave of COVID-19 and of course we've got to be extremely careful about that”.

Closer to home, Morrison noted the pending opening up of travel from NZ to Australia this Fri, and confirmed he had been in discussions with Pacific leaders.

“They're keen but we also want

to ensure that we get no COVID transmission into those Pacific Island communities, their health systems are different and we've got to be very careful about that risk,” Morrison said.

He also said there had been “good discussions” with places like South Korea, Singapore and Japan, but added “I think that's a bit further off”.

Yesterday's *Sun Herald* quoted Birmingham suggesting there could be a full travel bubble with NZ by the end of the year, which would then be used as a blueprint for opening up to other countries in the Pacific and within Asia.

“Our arrangement with NZ will provide a blueprint to prove the model of how we run safe corridors - green lanes of international visitors coming in and out of Australia - and whether this can be extended to any other similarly low risk countries down the track,” he said.

True value of cruise

QLD-BASED cruise specialist Clean Cruising features in the first of a series of videos launched today by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), highlighting the massive impact that the ongoing ban on cruising is having on Australian jobs.

CLIA is urging the travel sector to get behind the campaign, as part of its #WeAreCruise initiative, with a dedicated website at wearecruise.org which features social media assets, more information and guides on how to contact local MPs and puts the case for the industry moving forward to resumption.

“CLIA is working closely with government agencies at many levels, but we need help to reinforce the true size of the cruise community and the thousands of people whose livelihoods are at risk,” said CLIA MD Joel Katz.

See the first video in the series at traveldaily.com.au/videos.

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Plus click here for a toolkit to help promote the magazine.





Contiki to go live

YOUTH travel operator Contiki Holidays is set to host a special online Q&A session which will see a panel of experts field queries about its travel plans in 2021.

The company will also use the forum to update attendees about new destinations and trips that will be added next year.

Tickets are available to grab **HERE** and takes place on Wed 21 Oct at 6pm (AEDT).

Skal Melbourne

THE Skal Club of Melbourne will host a Zoom session on Thu 15 Oct at 2.45pm (AEDT), where Sportsnet Holidays founder Rob Cecconi will deliver his thoughts on how to take full advantage of the opportunities in a crisis.

Register for the event **HERE**.

Rydges polishes Canberra



A NEW chapter has arrived for the newly rebranded Rydges Canberra, with the property recently completing a multi-million dollar renovation.

The major refurbishment arrives ahead of a predicted increase in domestic tourism, and features a revamped lobby, reception area, bar, restaurant, conference and function spaces.

All guest rooms have also undergone new detailing, with the former Rydges Capital Hill hotel relaunching under the leadership of hospitality veteran Steven James - who joined the leadership team as the hotel's General Manager in Aug.

"With this renovation, our team is looking to create lasting memories, new levels of service and an unmatched experience for our guests, both corporate and leisure," James said.

"We've made a substantial investment in this property...as we look to do what we can to support interstate and intrastate travel," he added.

Pictured: Rydges Canberra's newly renovated bar area.

QTIC makes its case

THE Queensland Tourism Investment Council (QTIC) has outlined the priorities the State Government must tackle if the travel sector is to recover effectively from the health crisis.

The industry body is calling for a tourism portfolio allocated to a senior cabinet Minister in order to generate the best outcomes for communities that depend strongly on the tourism sector.

QTIC is also urging the Qld Government to improve business regulation, boost public infrastructure investment and create targeted relief of fees and charges for travel and tourism companies adversely affected by the travel shut down.

"It is important to map out a clear, collaborative plan for the long-term recovery of tourism within Queensland," said QTIC Chief Executive Daniel Gschwind.

HK hygiene push

THE Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) has launched a new suite of hygiene protocols for local businesses that it hopes will better prepare the destination for the resumption of inbound travel.

The regulations cover enhanced health and safety requirements across shopping malls, hotels, restaurants, retail stores, coach companies, tourism attractions and travel agencies, with standardised expectations including increased sanitation cleaning, mandatory temperature checks, mask wearing for all staff, one metre distancing between tourists and staff at all times and greater hand sanitiser availability.



Window Seat

TALK about a major pivot!

Singapore Airlines has decided that with most of its fleet grounded due to travel restrictions, now is the perfect time to take on Uber Eats at the food home delivery game, launching its own high-end dinner service in Singapore.

For the sum of US\$900, diners can have one of the carrier's signature Business class meal plans delivered to their door, including Matt Moran's Singapore-to-Sydney selection of beef consomme with corned wagyu beef, roasted lobster in spicy bisque sauce and apple crumble with seasonal berries. Okay, we know what you're thinking, US\$900 is a bit steep.

Well, thankfully diners also get to keep a 12-piece Wedgewood bone china set, plus a set of Singapore Airlines' pyjamas and slippers.

Please unfasten your belt, you are about to gorge.

BYO coffee prizes

THERE are a range of prizes to be won for attendees of Destination Webinars' upcoming coffee cluster session.

Prizes include hotel nights for 2021 in Singapore and Sentosa & Kiroro Resort in Japan.

The webinar will take place on Thu 15 Oct at 12pm (AEDT) and feature reps from Wendy Wu and Korea Tourism Organization - register **HERE** to attend.

MH retrain staff

MALAYSIA Airlines has introduced a new reskilling program it hopes will make its employees more adaptable to the future in a post-COVID world.

The initiative will include front line workers, such as pilots and cabin crew, retraining in areas like IT, facilities management or sales.

CEO

Conversations

with Bruce Piper

In collaboration with the Travel Industry Hub, join us on weekly webinars as Business Publishing Group publisher Bruce Piper sits down with some of the biggest names in the industry.

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR UPCOMING WEBINARS

THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY HUB

Where in the world?



THIS row of 30 terraced houses is one of the most iconic landmarks in this city.

The houses are arranged in a crescent shape around a perfect lawn and it is one of the greatest examples of Georgian architecture.

What is interesting about the construction of these buildings is

that the front facade of the houses was designed by an architect, but purchasers only bought a length of the facade and then built the house behind the front themselves.

Do you know where in the world these are located?

Check tomorrow for the answer.

Sudoku

BEGINNER

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

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

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

Who needs a drink?



THIS recipe comes to us from Bench Africa. In Southern Africa the Don Pedro is a classic dessert cocktail and it's usually made with Amarula but almost any alcohol can be used, even whiskey.

According to Bench Africa it's a perfect end to a busy day on safari or, when we can't go on

safari in Africa, just a busy day.

Keep sending your recipes to cocktails@traveldaily.com.au.

xx *Jenny*

Jenny Piper
Owner,
Business
Publishing
Group



Don Pedro

INGREDIENTS

- 1-3 shots Amarula or Baileys (or any milk liqueur)
- 3 scoops vanilla icecream

METHOD

Add the ingredients to a blender. Depending on how strong you like your cocktail you can use between 1 and 3 shots of the liqueur.

Blend until combined.

Serve in a glass immediately.

ANSWERS 09 OCT

Pub quiz: 1 Israel, 2 *The Love Boat*, 3 Qatar Peninsula, 4 Andaman Sea, 5 Miami Heat, 6 Auckland, 7 Zulu, 8 China, India and Pakistan, 9 Roman Empire, 10 Canada

Unscramble: deep, deepen, develop, dope, elope, eloped, envelop, envelope, ENVELOPED, epee, lope, loped, neep, nope, open, opened, peel, peeled, peen, peeve, peeved, pend, peon, pled, plod, pole, poled, pond, pone

Whose flag is this: Mauritius



Cebu seeks injection

PHILIPPINE carrier Cebu Pacific has announced plans to raise up to US\$500m through the sale & placement of new shares on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

The capital injection will be used to restructure the business to help cope with the lack of travel demand, with the airline currently operating at only 15% of normal capacity.

Restructuring will involve right-sizing its fleet of jets and boosting efficiencies through more digitalisation efforts, Cebu said.

Caravan safety push

THE Caravan Industry Association of Australia has established the Caravan & Trailer Road Safety Alliance, an initiative aimed at identifying key health and safety priorities in the sector.

Headed up by industry veteran Peter May, the alliance will focus on developing better technology, regulation, insurance, government grants, and research and consumer education.

Caravan holidays are tipped to increase significantly over the next three to five years.

Looking to the heavens



VISIT Sunshine Coast (VSC) took the opportunity on the weekend to fight the tourism downturn on the beaches, creating a large message for those flying overhead on Qantas' inaugural joy flight around Australia.

The seven-hour flight departed from Sydney on Sat, offering passengers a taste of tourism across state borders, with VSC constructing a plea in two-metre tall letters to capture the attention of travellers.

"We hope this grand gesture will remind them how much they love the Sunshine Coast and inspire them to stop dreaming and start planning their next visit," said Interim Chief Executive Officer Craig Davidson.

"New South Wales has traditionally been our strongest interstate market, and as we head out of the school holiday period, we are missing them more than ever," he added.

But the eye-catching message

wasn't just being made on the ground, with special onboard commentary about what the Sunshine Coast has to offer also broadcast to Qantas passengers, with all guests gifted some locally made Kokopod Chocolate.

Visit Sunshine Coast Board Director Rodger Powell, who was aboard the flight, hailed the prospect of QF bringing tourists to the Sunshine Coast soon.

"Hopefully when the border issue is depoliticised we can get back to having direct QF services into the Sunshine Coast...the authentic virtual welcome on Coolumb Beach shows just how enthusiastic real local people are to welcome back visitors."

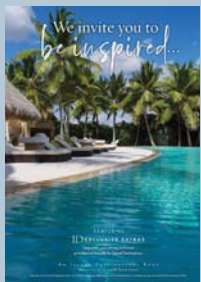
Dates at 2021 rates

LINDBLAD Expeditions is offering prices for 2022 Alaska cruises at 2021 rates when booked by 31 Jan 2021.

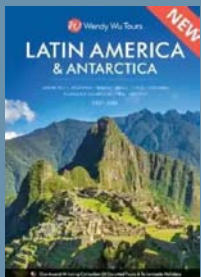
Itineraries include an eight-day coastal cruise - call 1300 361 012.

BROCHURES

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



ID Travel Group - Ultimate Exclusives brochure
ID Travel Group has gone to press with its Ultimate Exclusives brochure, valid through until 15 Apr. Featuring over 50 exclusive offers at luxurious resorts from around the world, the brochure exhibits major selling points such as guaranteed upgrades, complimentary spa treatments, multi-accommodation savings and flexible cancellation policies. The brochure also features destinations such as the Maldives, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Turks and Caicos, Greece and many more.



Wendy Wu - 2021 Latin America & Antarctica
Wendy Wu Tours' new 2021 Latin America & Antarctica brochure provides a range of new, fully inclusive tours. Stand outs of the program include a new 13-day Ecuador Highlights tour, visiting the colonial quarter of Quito, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and a journey along the Cinnamon Trail of the Spanish Conquistadors. Also available is a 21-day Treasures of South America trip, which visits Lima, Lake Titicaca, Iguazu Falls, Machu Picchu, Sugarloaf Mountain and more. A range of Antarctica expedition cruises also feature in the brochure.

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