

Rudd chat returns

TRAVEL Daily's Bruce Piper will this week follow up his recent interview with AFTA CEO Darren Rudd, discussing hot topics such as the \$125m Budget submission and AFTA industry mobilisation program in a live stream at 12pm AEST this Wed 09 Sep.

The Travel Industry Hub (TTIH) will once again play host for the free session - **REGISTER HERE**.

Also this week on TTIH is an intriguing chat with Jorge Fernandes of Applied Sense at 1pm on Thu, discussing the future for commissions and overrides.

Thu 10 Sep is also "RUOK? Day" and TTIH will host The Travel Industry's Biggest Morning Tea from 10am-noon, hosted by Walter Nand and Richard Taylor.

The format is a simple Zoom call that people can drop into, with Nand saying "you don't need to be sad, you don't need to be happy, just come as you are and check in" - more details at thetravelindustryhub.com.

Border plan a step closer

SEVEN out of the eight states and territories have agreed to create a roadmap towards a Dec reopening of borders, following a national cabinet meeting on Fri (**TD** breaking news Fri).

Prime Minister Scott Morrison met with state and territory leaders to advocate for a national hotspot suppression model over the continuation of hard borders, which would pave the way for domestic tourism operations to ramp up and accelerate its economic recovery.

The precise definition of what constitutes a hotspot is still to be determined, with the Federal Government formally supplying the states with a proposal which Morrison said they would use as an important "starting point".

"We have provided a clinically based, scientifically based definition of what a hotspot is in Australia," Morrison said.

The only leader to object to the

concept of a roadmap was WA Premier Mark McGowan, who signalled the state could stay closed "for a long time" after he rejected the Federal proposal.

"I made it clear that WA will not be agreeing to a hotspot model or a hotspot definition which replaces our successful border controls," he argued.

"Unlike the rest of the country, WA is not currently in a recession, so we won't be prematurely reopening our borders."

Tourism & Transport Forum CEO Margy Osmond said while it was disappointing that WA had elected not to join the plan, she welcomed a unified approach to rebooting interstate travel.

"Our industry remains on its knees in the fight of its life...the rapid and piecemeal implementation of complex and inconsistent domestic border has been stifling our industry's ability to recover," Osmond said.

Today's issue of TD

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

AA plots Nov return

AMERICAN Airlines looks set to return to Australian skies earlier than previously indicated, with GDS screens now showing AA72 SYD-LAX operating from 10 Nov.

Previously the carrier's local flights had been unavailable for reservation until Apr 2021.

Hurtigruten safety

HURTIGRUTEN Cruises has been undertaking a "formidable effort" to further enhance its health and safety procedures after the outbreak of COVID-19 aboard one of the early *Roald Amundsen* voyages as it resumed cruising in Norway (**TD** 04 Aug).

A formal report by Norwegian authorities has highlighted areas for improvement - more details in today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

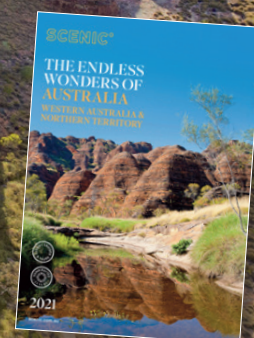
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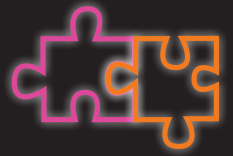
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More time please

A TRAVEL agent who stands accused of stealing hundreds and thousands of dollars by creating fake documents is now requesting more time to “arrange for funds for this matter to be negotiated and hopefully finalised,” a South Australian court heard last week.

Former Axis Travel staff member Arthur Zacharias pleaded guilty to multiple counts of fraud last year (TD 10 Oct 2019), including dishonest dealings with documents and deceiving another with intent to benefit, in a case that has been ongoing for more than four years.

Judge Hribal said she would allow another two months, but no more than that, for Zacharias to resolve the matter which relates to ongoing negotiations over five of the charges.

The case returns to court in Nov, with Hribal saying if it is not sorted by then she would deal with it because “enough is enough”.

Scenic expands domestic

SCENIC Luxury Cruises & Tours has today launched its Australian programs for 2021/22, for the first time creating two local brochures - one for WA/NT and another covering SA, Tas and Norfolk Island departures.

Scenic Marketing Manager Katherine O’Neill told TD that while the expansion reflected increasing demand for domestic

product, “Australia has always been part of our DNA,” with many clients traditionally touring locally with Scenic every second year between overseas trips.

The programs have been curated by ANZ Product Manager Liz Crowley, building on Scenic’s 34 years of experience in creating “unforgettable handcrafted journeys for our guests” & long-time relationships with suppliers.

The trips will have a maximum of 24 passengers per departure, extended stays and new options including the 13-day Mystical Kimberley which includes two nights in Kakadu and a flight over the Bungle Bungles.

The separate SA/Tas/Norfolk program includes a new relaxed pace Gems of South Australia trip with three nights in the Barossa Valley and three nights on Kangaroo Island - more from Scenic on **page six**.

UK air tax relief?

THE British Government looks set to support the recovery of the aviation sector by temporarily lowering the Air Passenger Duty (APD) which is levied on all flights from UK airports.

The move has not been confirmed at this stage, but a key Parliamentary transport committee is believed to have recommended a consultation on proposals for a six-month APD holiday to help boost demand.

Aloha to changes

HAWAIIAN Airlines has followed the lead of fellow US airlines by eliminating change fees (TD 02 Sep).

The carrier has been waiving the fees for guests who need to postpone their trips due to the COVID-19 pandemic since Mar, and is now extending the benefit across its entire network through to the end of the year.

“We know our guests’ plans change for a variety of reasons, and we want them to book a flight with confidence and the flexibility to travel when they are ready to take that special Hawaii vacation,” said HA Chief Executive Officer Peter Ingram.

HA has also implemented its Keeping You Safe comprehensive health and safety program which includes frequent disinfecting of lobby areas, kiosks, and ticket counters, electrostatic aircraft cabin spraying, and plexiglass barriers at staffed counters.

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Club Med supports

CLUB Med has announced further support for Australian guests in light of the government's international travel ban extension (**TD** 04 Sep).

Travellers can now rebook their 2020 holiday for the following year, for the same destination and at the same price using a future travel credit to be redeemed for travel to any Club Med resort.

"In light of the recent travel advice by the Australian Federal Government, we are prioritising existing bookings and working around the clock to ensure our loyal clients are looked after," said Club Med General Manager Pacific Rachael Harding.

Club Med has also implemented limited capacity protocols and temperature checks upon check to enhance guest safety.

VA-Bain deal approved

VIRGIN Australia CEO Paul Scurrah has hailed the acceptance by the airline's creditors of a formal Deed of Company Arrangement which will see the business taken over by Bain Capital (**TD** breaking news Fri).

Speaking after the virtual creditors' meeting which approved the deal, Scurrah said the outcome "brings us closer to exiting administration and allows us to focus on the future".

"It's vital for Australia to have two major airlines for consumer choice, value airfares and to help support the recovery of Australia's robust tourism sector after this crisis is over," he said.

Creditors have accepted the \$3.5b deal involving 10 separate deeds of company arrangement, which will be signed and completed within 15 days followed by the transfer of Virgin Australia Group's shares to Bain.

As a result, unsecured creditors will receive between 9 and 13 cents in the dollar on their claims from a pool of funds between \$462 million and \$612 million.

All customer travel credits

and prepaid flights provided post-administration will also be secured, the Velocity Frequent Flyer program will continue and aircraft will be retained.

Employment will also be ensured for the majority of Virgin Australia Group's employees, with entitlements to be paid in full for all staff, including those exiting the business.

The deeds will be completed once the Federal Court of Australia approves the share transfer, expected to occur before the end of Oct, following which a creditors' trust will be created to adjudicate claims and pay distributions to Virgin's 10,000 creditors, roughly 9,000 of whom are employees.

Payouts to creditors are expected between six and nine months from the completion of the sale, with lead administrator Vaughan Strawbridge noting there was "still a lot of work to do to complete the restructuring of the airline and complete the sale of the transaction before the business is ready to emerge from voluntary administration".

Calm before storm

PRIOR to the global pandemic, job creation in the travel agency and tour operator sectors in Australia rose by 55% between Jun 2014 and Jun 2019, outpacing employment in the wider tourism sector by 37%, new data released by Tourism Research Australia (TRA) has found.

The report also noted that inbound and outbound travel had experienced "sustained and significant growth" during the period, fuelled by the increased number of operators.

Regional areas accounted for 44 cents of every visitor dollar spent in Australia in 2018-19, despite accounting for only 31% of tourism businesses.

TRA flagged that the next report would show the "huge impact" COVID has had on the sector.



Window Seat

JUST a reminder to all of the spoiled dads over the weekend that it wasn't just the humans of Australia who celebrated Father's Day yesterday.

There was also Big Ronny the daddy Scrub Python, Bilya the Bilby, Princess the Southern Cassowary (yes, he's a dude), and Alfie the koala (**pictured**), all of whom were treated to some special tender loving care at the WILD LIFE Sydney Zoo.

So what did proud dad Alfie receive as a gift on the big day?

A bouquet of gum leaves and a bunch of loving cuddles from Marina his keeper, naturally.



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VOTE FOR THE FINALISTS NOW!

There have been a massive number of nominations for the Travel Daily Awards and voting for the finalists in the supplier categories is now open until 14 September.

Vote now for those who you believe deserve to be recognised for their support.

**Click here to vote for
the finalists now**



Trace the demise of CMV and its impact on the Australian market in the September issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read
travelBulletin

Fewer agents means more for the rest of us

OPINION

This opinion piece was submitted to Travel Daily anonymously.

Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to feedback@traveldaily.com.au.

YOU can look upon the culling of travel agents in two ways:

1. Thank god! Every big shopping centre or strip had between four and six travel agents - how did they make money?

Some were absolutely brilliant, some had high staff turnover, some had loyalty, some were just there to feed off a long-standing local brand, and many survived by under-cutting the guy near the food court by \$10 so Mr and Mrs Joe Blow got their 10 nights in Kuta "for a bargain price - I screwed 'em down". HQ made quick decisions and then they were gone.

2. Dear god! Some of the best and brightest small- and medium-sized agents have just run out of steam and savings from refunding last year's business. The hardest decision of their lives was to close or merge and admit they had

been defeated. They were not just a line on a balance sheet - they were a living breathing part of their community. Most have found someone to hand over to (another agent) because they want their customers looked after into the future (that's just what we do).

Whichever god you believe in - the Australian travel industry is going through a long overdue correction at the expense of people's jobs and livelihoods.

I had heard, and the research escapes me, that Australia had one of the highest per capita penetrations of travel agents in the world. A steady production line that spat out an agency or three for every new shopping precinct and when they didn't perform after a few months or a year - they would turn into a nail salon or a pop-up book store that sell books that didn't make the Dymocks' top 1,000.

Recent Ibis World research

(in the section you don't have to pay for) tells me that there were 8,467 businesses classified as Travel Agency and Tour Arrangement Services with 37,000 employees - with conservative estimates that we've lost 25% of those people and businesses (perhaps more) - we know the 20/21 financial year is going to be down considerably until int'l travel resumes (no

matter how hard we try to convince consumers to reverse the trends of the past 10 years and give us back their domestic holiday business, which we may have spurned in the past, to help prop us up).

2021/22 will be the year for revenge

travel, pent up demand, people who were on JobKeeper starting to get some disposable cash again, the affluent who didn't escape on their yachts will splurge and it will be bigger and better than 2018 and 2019 and for those of us who survive - it's

“
It's going to be a bloody bonanza!
”

going to be a bloody bonanza!

Less travel agents means more business for the rest of us in a recovering and eventually resurging market - but a hunting ground for smart OTAs and principals with direct booking capabilities.

They are almost the only people advertising now - and whilst we can be glib to each other about how poor their refund response was, or "you're a number not a name" or how personal your touch was in retrieving clients from Tanzania - they are watching and rubbing their hands together as "For Lease" signs go up across the travel agency community around Australia. Wouldn't you?

It's probably cognisant to finish off by saying that when a production line turns off it invariably turns on again when times seem to get better.

It will be a disappointing day in the near future when the nail salon that was there last week morphs overnight into another travel agency we really don't need. Less is more.



Silk Aussie reboot

SILKAIR has indicated it may resume flights to Australia from as early 05 Dec, according to an inventory update on GDS screens.

The changes show the airline intends to resume return services from Singapore to Cairns and Darwin operating twice weekly.

Serko in top 50

CORPORATE travel technology firm Serko Limited has been included in the Standard & Poors/NZX 50 Index which is designed to measure the performance of the fifty largest stocks listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange.

Serko, which is also listed in Australia, will be formally incorporated in the Kiwi index effective 21 Sep, due to a regular quarterly rebalancing by S&P.

Intrepid Aussie trip

INTREPID Travel last Fri took nine travellers from Qld and SA on the company's first tour in Australia since the COVID-19 travel shutdown in Mar.

The group departed from Cairns on the new five-day Daintree Retreat tour, part of the newly launched Intrepid Retreats range (**TD** 17 Jun) which sees travellers immerse themselves in a single location, in handpicked accommodation alongside a range of nearby experiences.

UK consolidation

WELSH travel agency chain Tailor Made Travel has been placed into administration, but then sold to rival group Hays which will retain Tailor Made's 20 stores and about 100 staff.

Sudoku

EASY

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.

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

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

Whose flag is this?



THIS flag has the same design but reverse colours of the flag of Thailand, and the two countries share more than just similar flags, with both nations enjoying a tropical climate (though they are in opposite hemispheres).

The design is inspired by both the flags of France and Argentina and the government of the country flies a different version of the flag, with a coat of arms added.

Do you know whose flag this is?

Who needs a drink?



NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has shared this cocktail with us, as a tropical reminder of Hawaii.

Despite the warmer weather we've experienced in Sydney recently, unfortunately we still can't sip this on board a cruise while watching the sunset at the moment, so our own backyard will have to do instead.

If you're more of a visual

learner, you can also watch how to make the cocktail **HERE**.

As always, please keep sending your recipes to cocktails@traveldaily.com.au.

xx Jenny

Jenny Piper
Owner,
Business
Publishing
Group



Wiki Rum Punch

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lime
- 50ml pineapple juice
- 7.5ml Passionfruit liqueur
- 22.5ml Sugar syrup
- 30ml Bacardi Gold Rum
- 15ml Bacardi Superior Rum
- Aromatic cocktail bitters
- Fresh tropical fruit, to garnish

METHOD

Add all ingredients to your cocktail shaker. Shake over ice. Strain over ice in your favourite cocktail glass. Garnish with fresh tropical fruit.

ANSWERS 04 SEP

Pub quiz: 1 New Jersey and Victoria, 2 Malaysia, 3 Israel, 4 United Kingdom, 5 Seattle, 6 Portugal, 7 Indira Gandhi, 8 Antarctica, 9 Austria and Hungary, 10 Jetstar Asia, Jetstar Japan, Jetstar Hong Kong and Jetstar Pacific, 11 Japan (jar + pan)

Unscramble: agape, apace, camp, cape, champ, CHAMPAGNE, chap, chapman, cheap, encamp, gamp, gape, heap, hemp, napa, nape, neap, pace, paeon, pagan, page, panache, pane, pang, peach, pean, pecan, phage

Where in the world: Stari Most, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina



River to bay tourism

THE Qld Government has committed \$5.5 million to building three new pontoons at Howard Smith Wharves in a bid to boost river tourism in Brisbane following the impact of COVID-19. The new pontoons will be open to tour operators as a pick-up and drop-off point and is expected to inject an annual visitor spend of \$9.2 million and attract more than 294,000 international visitors.

I'm all reefed up

W BRISBANE has partnered with Lady Elliot Island to offer a new experience called All Reefed Up, a package that includes two nights of accommodation at W Brisbane, parking and a Great Barrier Reef day tour. Prices for the adventure start from \$1,559 for a single occupancy, or \$2,418 for twin share accommodation - **CLICK HERE** for further details.

Scenic Australia on show



THERE was definitely no confusion about the destinations being promoted by Scenic during a video chat on Fri, with the team's Zoom backgrounds showcasing some of the stunning images from the company's new Australian brochures (see **page 2**). **Pictured** "on message" at top

are Emma Davie, Director Trade Sales & Commercial Partnerships and Liz Crowley, Product Manager Australia & NZ; while at bottom is Scenic's Marketing Manager, Katherine O'Neill.

Viking ocean 22/23

DEPLOYMENT details have been unveiled for five of Viking's eight ocean ships for late 2022 and up to Sep 2023, including cruises on the new *Viking Venus* and another Australasian deployment of *Viking Orion*. Bookings are open now at 2020 prices - more details on 138 747.

LATAM delays Oz

LATAM Airlines has pushed back reservations for its nonstop Santiago to Melbourne services until 30 Jun 2021, as well as Santiago to Sydney which has been delayed to 27 Mar 2021. GDS now indicates the return of SCL-AKL-SYD effective 02 Jan 2021, flying four times a week.

Shutdown dents US

RESTRICTIONS on int'l travel have cost the US economy more than US\$155b, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council. The WTTC also warned the sector would take "years" to recover, and is now calling for a resumption of transatlantic travel to kickstart the recovery.

Win and dine with Journey Beyond Cruise Sydney

At Journey Beyond Cruise Sydney offers a true epicurean discovery of New South Wales. Featuring seasonal and regionally sourced ingredients paired with a range of complimentary wines from some of the state's most prestigious wine regions. Dining experience is best described as personal, stylish and distinctly Sydney, whilst showcasing our iconic harbour. Christmas Party bookings now available!

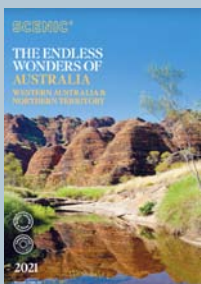
Journey Beyond is giving away two prizes, the first being a luncheon for 2 (valued at \$238) with the second prize a dinner for 2 (valued at \$350). To win, send us your answers to both questions in 25 words or less per question to journeybeyond@traveldaily.com.au

- 1) What makes an experience on Journey Beyond Cruise Sydney unique?
- 2) Tell us what makes an experience on Journey Beyond Cruise Sydney so unique?



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.



Scenic - Western Australia and NT - 2021
Scenic has launched The Endless Wonders of Australia brochure for 2021, featuring an expanded range of tours for Western Australia and the Top End. New itineraries added for 2021 include Mystical Kimberley tours from Darwin to Broome, visiting the Bungle Bungles and the Litchfield National Park. Also new is the South Western Mosaic package, taking in Albany and the Margaret River. The brochure also features earlybird savings of up to \$1,000 per couple when booked by 31 Jan.

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

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