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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news including our PUZZLE page plus a full page from Ponant.

Ponant 2023 Arctic

PONANT is today showcasing its 2023 luxury expeditions in the far north, with the cruise line exploring the Arctic region in 27 voyages taking in Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Canada.

Several vessels will operate the program, including *Le Boreal*, *L'Austral*, and *Le Bellot* - for more details see the **cover page**.

Conference canned

AUSTRALIAN Regional Tourism has announced the postponement of the 2021 Australian Regional Tourism Conference, which had originally been scheduled to take place 11-13 Oct in Ballarat, Vic.

The conference has been rescheduled to Oct 2022, with the decision made due to the increasing restrictions impacting the event including its speakers, staff, sponsors, suppliers and delegates.

NSW govt travel tender

THE NSW Government has released details of its Whole of Government travel management services tender (TD 23 Jul), with applications open until 09 Sep.

The Request for Tender seeks an organisation to provide a "quality cost-effective and fully comprehensive travel management service," including policy enforcement, car hire, accommodation, rail, coach and ferry travel, along with group, meeting and event bookings.

The successful provider will also undertake the booking and ticketing of all domestic, trans-Tasman and international travel for all NSW Government organisations, providing individual clusters and agencies in the administration with tailored servicing and account management in accordance with their individual requirements.

The tender documents specify the reporting of consolidated carbon emissions, overall and individual agency-specific data and the provision of "robust, up-to-date and appropriate leading technology solutions".

It's understood the opportunity is the biggest travel tender across Australia this year, with keen interest expected from across the corporate travel agency sector.

"The TMC must demonstrate their ability in managing large, complex corporate and/or Government accounts to work with NSW Government to jointly explore future opportunities in identifying process and efficiency improvements," the tender states.

There's also a requirement to show the ability to meet demand for large amounts of bookings for significant projects, emergency and crisis management and crew-related accommodation needs.

TMCs will work under existing supplier agreements in place with the NSW Government, which include Qantas, Virgin Australia and Regional Express on domestic flights; Avis, Budget and Hertz for car hire; and Qantas, Virgin Australia, Air Canada, Cathay Pacific, British Airways, Qatar Airways and Etihad for international flights.

The state Government also has a domestic accommodation program consisting of 412 property agreements as well as 500 hotel chain deals.

The TMC must provide the "lowest airfares and rates available in the marketplace at the time of booking," including private fares, GDS and non-GDS content, market nets and consolidator fares.

A briefing for prospective tenderers will be held at 10am AEST on 17 Aug - more details at tenders.nsw.gov.au.

More corporate travel news on page four of today's TD.

\$2.2m NT promo

TOURISM Central Australia has partnered with NT Now and Holidays of Australia to promote packages featuring Alice Springs and the Lasseter Region.

The \$2.2 million Mates Rates campaign offers consumers savings of up to \$1,000 per person off selected Red Centre bookings made by 30 Sep, for travel through until 30 Apr 2022.

Holidays of Australia MD Ben Mead said "now more than ever Australians need to get out and explore the very best of their own backyards...the big wide open spaces, natural beauty and unhurried space of the Red Centre make it the ideal holiday".

Tourism Central Australia CEO Danial Rochford said the campaign, supported by COVID recovery funding from both the Federal and NT Governments, would provide a much needed boost to tourism operators in and around Kings Canyon, Alice Springs and Uluru.

Carnival great place

CARNIVAL Australia has come in 10th position on this year's Great Place to Work program, with the company's staff highly rating the organisation as fun, caring and accepting.

The survey asks employees about their relationships with management, colleagues and work, measuring parameters such as credibility, fairness, pride and camaraderie.

CEO Sture Myrmell said the accolade recognised the joint commitment of the Carnival team to stand by each other through the pandemic - more cruise news in today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

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49% will book trips well into the future - more than 8 weeks out
Source: nib Travel Brands Survey, May 2021, N=1044, Australian respondents - booking prior to departure date.
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EK links to Aeronology

EXCLUSIVE

AERONOLOGY is continuing to roll out new NDC Direct connections to airlines, with Emirates the latest carrier to offer its rich content via the Australian travel tech firm.

The move follows similar links with Qantas (**TD** 14 Jul) and Singapore Airlines (**TD** 29 Jul), and follows the company's formal certification by IATA as a Level 4 NDC aggregator early last month.

Aeronology co-founders Russell Carstensen and Ahmed Fakhra said they were excited at the company's continuing development, hailing Emirates' innovation and NDC teams.

"It has been an incredible journey over the past six months working with them to create Aeronology's unique NDC services," Carstensen said.

"The Emirates NDC service can be used by corporate, retail

and wholesale travel businesses anywhere in the world and around the clock," he said.

As with all carriers on the platform, Aeronology provides the NDC ability to search, shop, book, ticket, rebook, reissue, revalidate, void and refund all NDC and NDC/GDS transactions in a single screen, while the system also gives the ability for seamless links to any API-connected travel agency mid-back office.

On board at TEQ

TOURISM and Events Queensland (TEQ) has welcomed four new appointments to its Board to help support the state's tourism recovery.

Joining are Sunlover Reef Cruises' Brian Hennessy, Kylie Blucher from media group Nine and Duane Fraser, who has extensive skills in Indigenous and environmental policy.

Go get goPassport

AUSTRALIAN tech company goPassport is aiming to prevent COVID-19 cancellations with its new platform to help reduce confusion surrounding border restrictions, and support tourism activity across the nation.

GoPassport's Know Not No platform provides the most up-to-date information on the coronavirus situation and restrictions Australia-wide, and with travel bubbles, such as that with New Zealand.

Led by infectious diseases and border control experts, Know Not No users can see precisely the coronavirus situation and restrictions in their local government area and where they intend to travel to by clicking on an interactive map.

Chief Exec Matt McKinley said travel agents embedding a link to Know Not No into their booking systems could assist in helping travellers feel more confident.

NZ connections

TOURISM New Zealand says it's seeking to reintroduce the destination to the Australian travel trade region-by-region, with its ongoing monthly webinar series aiming to reconnect agents with our closest international travel option.

The organisation's local trade team is taking advisors on a "virtual road trip" to unpack the highlights and secret gems that will rebuild confidence and empower them to better sell New Zealand regions.

A total of 10 prizes are on offer for each webinar, including five specially curated regional gift baskets and up to \$1,000 towards a return flight to New Zealand for five participants each time, valid for 12 months.

The next stop on the trip is Central Otago and Clutha, taking place on 12 Aug at 11am AEDT - to sign up and for more info see traveltrade.newzealand.com.

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Window Seat

TODAY marks International Beer Day - an occasion which has not gone unnoticed in Oklahoma, where 60 breweries have come together to launch a craft beer trail.

Printed and downloadable maps of the track are now available, as part of a joint effort between Oklahoma Agritourism and the state's Craft Brewers Association.

Most of the breweries are located in and around Oklahoma City and Tulsa, the state's two largest cities, and many can be enjoyed as part of a stopover during a Route 66 adventure.

Marshall Brewing, NEFF Brewing, American Solera, Equity Brewing, and more are all taking part - [CLICK HERE](#).

Intrepid starts vax drive

INTREPID Travel has launched a global vaccine equity campaign.

On-the-ground support in remote communities, a \$100,000 donation from the Intrepid Foundation to UNICEF Australia, and a mandatory vaccination policy for all travellers and tour leaders from Sep will all be part of the crusade.

Intrepid's teams are also taking practical steps to help support access to vaccines, including paid vaccination leave, to make it easier for all staff globally to receive a vaccination as soon as they're eligible to do so.

In Peru, Intrepid has provided free transport to and accommodation at a vaccination hub for trekking porters and their families in the Sacred Valley.

Intrepid is also advocating for vaccine equality in the country through local govt channels.

To help address vaccine

hesitancy in Sri Lanka, Intrepid hosted an information and Q&A session with Professor Neelika Malavige, a member of the World Health Organization's technical advisory committee.

"Intrepid was founded on ideals of inclusivity and equality and we're very concerned about the unequal access to vaccines around the world," said Intrepid's CEO James Thornton.

"Ending the pandemic is not only about you and your vaccine... we have a responsibility to ensure that everyone can safely and fairly access vaccinations, in every country around the world."

Intrepid is also asking its community to support UNICEF Australia's campaign by giving to Give the World a Shot via The Intrepid Foundation, with 100% of donations to go to supporting UNICEF's work delivering coronavirus vaccines.

QR A350 problems

QATAR Airways is closely monitoring the condition of its Airbus A350 fleet, in which the fuselage surface is degrading at an accelerated rate.

Following the instruction of its regulator, 13 Qatar Airbus A350s have been grounded until the root cause of the problem can be established and a satisfactory solution to permanently correct the underlying condition is found.

Qatar has already taken action to return its A330 fleet into service with immediate effect to offset some of the impact of the grounded A350s.

Bubble delays likely

AUSTRALIA'S bubble with New Zealand is unlikely to reopen until "much later" this year, if not next year, according to disease modelling expert at the University of Auckland Shaun Hendy.

NZ has paused the bubble with Australia for at least eight weeks.

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CORPORATE UPDATE

FCM welcomes Andrew Yell

FCM Meetings and Events says the appointment of industry expert Andrew Yell (pictured) as its new Group Travel Business Leader in Australia (TD 07 Aug) would help position the organisation for the recovery of travel demand.

FCM Meetings & Events GM Simone Seller said "we're looking forward to him improving what is already a terrific team that has a superb track record in delivering for our clients".

Yell has decades of experience in the hospitality and tourism sectors, and is well known to the wider travel industry through previous senior roles at Creative Holidays and Excite Holidays.

He acknowledged that "everything has to be different for the meetings and events industry going forward...but I have no doubt that different will be better, it actually gives companies the rare chance to re-engineer their business and their business models."

Yell will be responsible for ensuring the logistics are in place for clients, ranging from booking and quoting right through to execution and fulfilment.

"Prior to the current COVID-19 challenge the eastern seaboard is facing, business was really recovering well with increasing headcounts across multiple industries, we just have to be



aware of and accept that there will be bumps along the Four Phase Plan road," he said.

Yell said he was thrilled to be joining the Flight Centre family.

"The FCM brand was incredibly attractive," he said.

"It's a big, stable company and it has a great reputation in the corporate space...it's well-known the business loves to promote within, so this was too good an opportunity not to grab."

Deloitte recovery forecasts

DELOITTE has predicted that corporate travel in the USA will remain "significantly below pre-pandemic levels" for at least another 12 months, as it reported on the results of a survey of 150 American travel managers whose companies' 2019 air spend was worth over US\$120 million each.

The consulting firm is now projecting that US business travel in Q4 of 2021 will reach 25-35% of pre-pandemic levels, a significant improvement on Q2 spending which was only about 10%-15% of 2019 figures.

A steady rebound will see this increase to 40%-60% in Q2 of 2022, and then 65-80% by the end of next year.

However the managers polled noted the travel shutdown had saved "hundreds of millions of dollars", with some respondents planning to permanently reduce travel frequency, increase policy compliance and reduce their companies' carbon footprints.

CTM kicks a goal

CORPORATE Travel Management (CTM) has inked a new partnership with Luton Town Football Club in the UK.

The partnership will see CTM's specialist sport travel services promoted across the club's channels, including through its business community to offer enhanced supporter services and travel packages.

CTM is also the official supplier of supporter travel solutions for NRL Travel in Australia as well as Rangers Football Club in the UK.

Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly's fortnightly consumer magazine called *Keep Dreaming* is specially designed for agents to send their clients.



US vaccination plan

THE US Government is reportedly in the process of developing a plan to mandate full vaccination for all inbound travellers to the country.

A White House official noted overnight that the United States is keen to reboot its travel sector and start allowing more arrivals, however, given the chaos caused by the Delta variant, would need to initially deploy a phased approach for visitors - including a requirement for full vaccination.

No timeline for the plan has been set, with the spokesperson stating that a recommencement of international travel would need to be carried out in a "safe and sustainable manner".

MEANWHILE, the United States has achieved its goal of administering at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine to 70% of adults this week, a month later than initially flagged.

Occupancy plummet

AUSTRALIA'S hotel occupancy is on a steep decline amid the latest coronavirus lockdowns.

After being one of the highest-performing countries during the early portion of the year, STR data from 26 Jul to 01 Aug has found Australian markets with longer restrictions have seen occupancy levels dip below 20%.

Sydney and its surrounding geographic markets posted 15.8% and 15.6% occupancy levels respectively.

WA tourism events

THE broadened Getting the Show Back on the Road+ program is supporting more live ticketed events in Western Australia.

WA Minister for Culture & the Arts David Templeman announced the program would now include applications to support tourism events and regional agri-shows.



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Trade & MICE Marketing Manager

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Club Med Founder Gerard Blitz 1950

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Travel Daily



Icon under a microscope



THIS landmark is iconic and easily recognisable when you see the whole picture, but can you identify it from this small portion of the image?

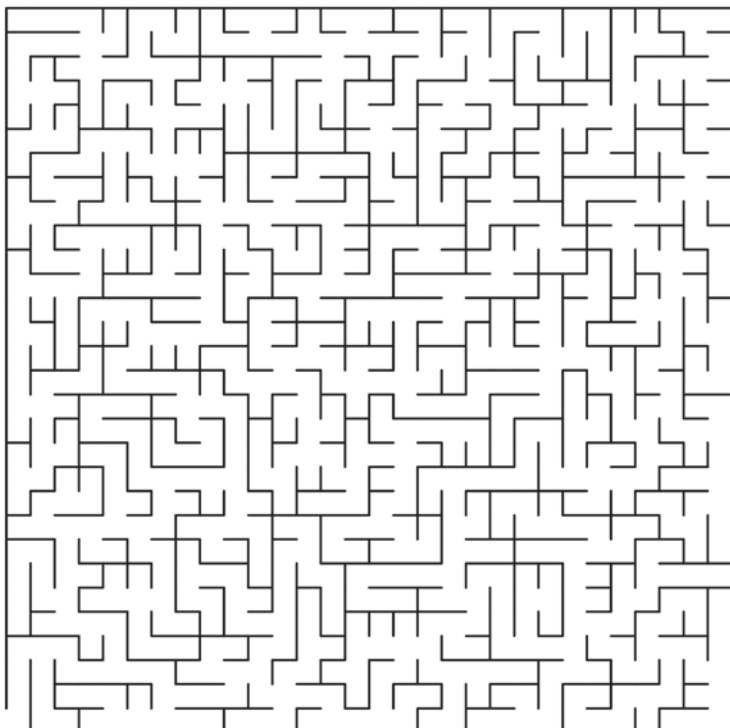
Known by another name for many years, this incredible rock

is considered one of the greatest natural wonders of the world and is one of the largest monoliths, measuring 348m tall.

The rock itself is around 550 million years old and has deep spiritual meaning to the locals.

A-maze-ing

CAN you find your way through this maze? Start at the top and finish at the bottom.



Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the *TD* Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 04 Sep 2014:

SOME travellers set crazy demands for the care of their pets while on holidays.

According to a survey of 8,000 people by Small Luxury Hotels of the World, 15.1% said they would gladly pay a supplement for their pets to be pampered.

Some of the demands received range from the basic grooming & dog beds to the extreme such as high-end pata negra ham, caviar and blueberry facials.

Dog owners in China provided some of the weirdest requests including unlimited playtime & even a "sausage dog girlfriend".

Aussies aren't exempt, with one Burmese cat owner asking for somebody to repeatedly assure her cat "how beautiful she was".

Famous faces



THERE are three different faces that make up this picture.

They are a mixture of famous celebrities and travel names.

Can you figure out who the

eyes, nose and mouth in this picture belong to?

And don't worry if you can't guess them all, two out of three ain't bad!

ANSWERS 06 AUG
Icon under a microscope: Uluru, Northern Territory, Australia
Celebrity faces: Eyes - Phillipa Harrison, Tourism Australia, Nose - Donald Trump, Mouth - Helen Mirren



The pandemic and the environment. Has this been a time for travel businesses to pause for effect? Read more in the August issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read

QR sell and win

QATAR Airlines has extended its Sell and Win incentive to 30 Sep, with a flight to Europe up for grabs when travel resumes.

Advisors simply need to sell as many QR flights ex-Australia until 30 Sep for a chance to win.

Email your details **HERE**.

Win Adventures Through COVID by Parris Fotias

Every day this week *Travel Daily* and Parris Fotias are giving readers the chance to win a signed copy of Parris' new book, *Adventures Through COVID*.



Parris Fotias has just flown home from a work trip through India. Eleven days later, COVID-19 is officially declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation. Soon after, the Australian Government closes its international border under Biosecurity Act 2015.

Adventures Through COVID is a personal odyssey that chronicles the frustrations of life during the pandemic.

It is a pilgrimage through past memories looking back on the funny, the ridiculous and the almost forgotten to help cope with an uncertain future.

To win today's copy be the first person to email the correct answer to the question below to competitions@traveldaily.com.au

Which Dorchester Collection hotel would a Fresh Prince decide to stay in?

Raffles rattles off even more



RAFFLES Hotels & Resorts has confirmed the next 24 months will be an important period for its global expansion strategy, flagging several key openings in major markets.

Among the new properties later this year will be the Raffles Udaipur, India (pictured) situated on a 21-acre private island in Uda Sagar Lake and boasting 101 rooms with private pools.

Next year will see the debut of the Raffles London at The OWO, comprised of 125 rooms and suites, 85 residences, and a

IHG Dublin Airport

IHG Hotels & Resorts has opened the Holiday Inn Dublin Airport in partnership with JMK Group, featuring 420 rooms.

The new property, only a ten-minute drive from Dublin Airport T1 and T2, also boasts a full-service restaurant that is open all day, meeting facilities able to accommodate up to 120 delegates, on-site parking, free wi-fi, fitness centre, and a 24-hour Starbucks Cafe.

collection of nine restaurants.

Also in the pipeline for next year is the Raffles Boston Back Bay Hotel & Residences, while 2023 will see Raffles Moscow, Russia open its doors near Red Square.

Regional tourism call

AUSTRALIAN Regional Tourism has called for more emergency funding to help prop up the struggling sector, stating recent government support packages don't go far enough.

"We are yet to see any real and meaningful action," ART Chair Coralie Bell noted.

"There is still no national tourism strategy to provide a pathway for business recovery and regional tourism measures have never been included in the national strategy," she added.

Moving forward, the body would like to see the Tourism 2030 strategy delivered soon with achievable regional targets in place, and financial support tied to strategic priority outcomes.

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

Seabourn is giving up to US\$2,000 of onboard spending money when bookings for a 2022 voyage to Europe, Alaska or Canada & New England are made by 04 Oct. The line is also offering up to US\$2,000 of ship credit for passengers who book a Penthouse or Premium Suite. Call 13 24 02.

The **Mitchelton Airstream Hotel** is offering guests a special Grown Up Getaway package for the discounted rate of \$555 per night. The deal for the Victoria-based hotel is available to book between 20 Aug and 05 Oct, with the package including a guided winery tour, a two-course dinner for two at The Muse restaurant, and dessert around a campfire at night. For more information, call 03 5736 2288.

MSC Cruises is offering savings of up to \$1,224 per person as part of its Aug Cruise of the Month. The offer is valid until 31 Aug, with the 17-night cruise aboard *MSC Lirica* departing Venice and exploring places like Dubrovnik in Croatia and Israel's Haifa. Call 1300 028 302 for details.

The recently opened **Hilton Melbourne Little Queen Street** has introduced a City Sleepover package from only \$295. The offer includes one-night stay in a King Guest Room, breakfast at the Luci restaurant, free wi-fi and valet parking. **CLICK HERE** for more information.

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