



NCL COVID impact

THE COVID-19 pandemic saw Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings' (NCLH) revenue decline 80% to US\$1.3 billion, with the company posting a US\$4 billion loss.

With an average monthly cash burn of US\$190 million over the last quarter of last year, NCLH has a total debt of US\$11.8 billion and US\$3.3 billion of cash, with Chief Executive Officer Frank Del Rio calling 2020 "without a doubt the most challenging year in the company's 50-plus year history".

About US\$15 million per month of last quarter's cash burn related to expenses tied up in preparing vessels for a potential return to service in early 2021, in connection with the CDC Conditional Order - an order which has not so far materialised.

Excite Hols refunds flowing

EXCLUSIVE

THE dogged pursuit by Sydney travel advisor Liz Ellis from Cherrybrook Travel has this week seen hundreds of thousands of dollars in refunds from the collapsed Excite Holidays finally paid out to travel agents.

Ellis was part of the failed company's Committee of Inspection, stepping up at the first creditors' meeting to assist the KPMG administrators to sort through the mess.

Last Fri KPMG's Phil Quinlan wrote to affected agents, confirming that some Excite bookings, which had been pre-paid through Expedia, had been fully refunded to the company. After administrative costs, travel agents and their clients have now received a payout in excess of 71c in the dollar for these bookings.

Other bookings had been paid via Excite company credit cards to Expedia, which were only partly recovered, with a 40.4% return.

A total of 460 bookings were

refunded, with the payments now in travel agents' accounts.

Ellis told *Travel Daily* she was thrilled at the outcome, saying "I can't believe I started this with trying to work out a way to get two refunds back for clients.

"I couldn't let them down and thought I had to throw heart and soul into this to try to work out a way that we could do this, without it all being eaten up and headed for the unsecured creditors' account," she said.

"Now almost a year later we have a huge pot of money back to give agents and then to clients."

Excite Holidays spectacularly collapsed early last year (*TD* 13 Jan 2020) with an estimated \$35 million shortfall and initial expectations of no payout whatsoever to creditors.

The administration process is continuing, with other unsecured creditor claims currently estimated to be paid out to the tune of 1 to 2 cents in the dollar.

Agents and others who are still owed money are urged to ensure they have lodged a formal proof of debt form by 28 Feb.

Flighties forever!

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has launched a new alumni website for its former staff and other travel industry professionals, with the initiative aiming to maintain connections with "the people who make up our family tree," according to FCTG Head of People and Culture, Allisa O'Connell.

The Flighties Forever site, delivered in partnership with PageUp, also includes current job listings and also enables members to register for alerts as soon as new roles become available.

"Our people have always been our greatest asset and our biggest investment, so to lose so many talented people as a result of COVID has been one of the hardest challenges we've faced," O'Connell said, adding she hoped that ultimately the site would connect participants to a role "so we can see you back where you belong".

There are also opportunities to share stories, stay connected and maintain professional development - see the site at alumni.fctgcareers.com.

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BA agent fares

BRITISH Airways has launched new flexible fare types which are exclusively available to travel agents, as part of its "response to the challenging environment".

The new Select and SelectPro fare products are both fully refundable, and can be amended with no change fees.

Select fares cost from £50 extra for a short-haul return ticket ex the UK, and from £100 additional on long-haul flights when compared to Standard/Plus fares.

BA noted that the fare products would also be available to book via other airline partners including American Airlines and Finnair - for more details see ba-agent.com.

Today's issue of TD

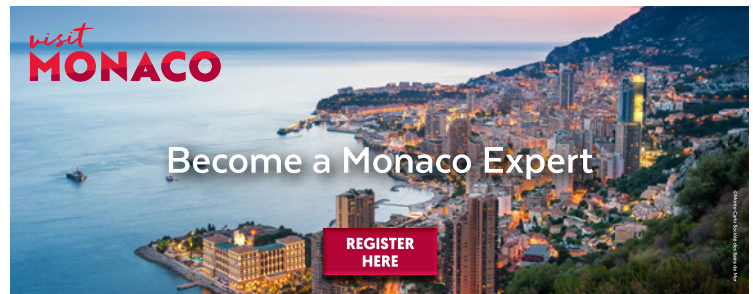
Travel Daily today has six pages of news including our PUZZLE page.

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Administration for Vic agent

EXCLUSIVE

THE voluntary administrators of Helloworld Travel Monbulk and Bentleigh have urged struggling travel and tourism operators to seek financial advice prior to the wind-up of JobKeeper on 28 Mar.

Mackay Goodwin was appointed last week by Jennifer Watson, the Director of JMW Travel Pty Ltd, which has operated the two Helloworld agencies as well as Nexus Business Travel since 2009.

Watson said the businesses were continuing to trade, while benefiting from the guidance of a restructuring expert.

"We sought help from Mackay Goodwin as soon as possible, as we didn't want to leave it too late...we wanted to ensure we were doing the right thing by our staff and by our creditors."

Rather than closing down, "we're focused on getting back into the business of sending our valued customers on the holidays

they have been missing," Watson said, adding that: "we are looking forward to the post-pandemic future".

Mackay Goodwin CEO Domenic Calabretta noted that the travel industry had been among the hardest hit by COVID-19.

"I am saddened to think that there will be more voluntary and involuntary liquidations as JobKeeper is removed," he said, with predictions that many firms will find themselves in a similar situation to JMW Travel by the end of next month.

"Sadly we know there will be more travel businesses experiencing hard times, but acting now and seeking help means it won't necessarily mean the end of the road," he said.

Calabretta urged companies concerned about their survival from Apr to get advice as soon as possible, "and not wait until JobKeeper dries up."

Anchors aweigh WA

CORAL Expeditions has extended its successful small ship restart to Western Australia, offering a new 45-voyage program to include itineraries exploring WA's coastline.

Visiting a number of Western Australia's rarely visited islands, *Coral Adventurer* is currently en route from Adelaide to Fremantle, from where she will set sail on 10 Mar.

The ship will also sail its celebrated Kimberley voyage between Broome and Darwin, with other destinations for the season to include the Houtman Abrolhos, the Ningaloo Coast, Shark Bay, the Muiron & Montebello Islands and the Dampier Archipelago.

The brand-new *Coral Geographer*, set to be formally delivered next month, will also depart on her sold-out maiden voyage on 31 Mar, for the Across the Top of Australia expedition.



Window Seat

WE ALL want to travel again, but what would you be prepared to give up...?

More than a third of Americans (38%) would give up sex for a year to be able to travel again immediately, according to Trivago.

The technology company also found one in five respondents would dump their partner for a chance to hit the road again, and a quarter would be happy to trade their savings for a trip.

Nearly half polled said they would even give up their jobs.

Britons appear to be the most desperate to stretch their wings, with four in 10 declaring they are ready to travel again immediately, even if it means more than 12 months without, well, spending more personal time with their partners.

NCL
Feel Free

NEW ITINERARIES SELLING FAST

FEEL FREE TO AWAKEN YOUR ISLAND SPIRIT.
Norwegian Spirit 2022 South Pacific cruises now on sale.

TAKE 4
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- free BEVERAGE PACKAGE WORTH US\$1,400
- free SPECIALTY DINING PACKAGE WORTH US\$160
- free SHORE EXCURSIONS CREDIT WORTH US\$200
- free WIFI PACKAGE WORTH US\$130

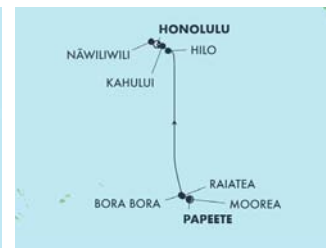
14-DAY SOUTH PACIFIC: FIJI, BORA BORA & MOOREA TO PAPEETE

FROM SYDNEY
23 APR 2022



12-DAY SOUTH PACIFIC: BORA BORA, KAUAI & MAUI TO HONOLULU

FROM PAPEETE
7, 31 MAY & 14 NOV 2022



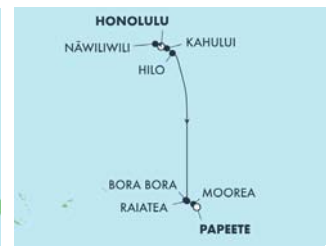
7-DAY SOUTH PACIFIC: BORA BORA, MOOREA & RAIATEA

ROUND-TRIP PAPEETE
31 OCT & 7 NOV 2022



12-DAY SOUTH PACIFIC: BORA BORA, KAUAI & MAUI TO PAPEETE

FROM HONOLULU
19 MAY, 19 OCT & 26 NOV 2022



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*Offer correct as at 24 February and is subject to change or withdrawal. Offer ends 31 March 2021 unless extended. For full terms and conditions click here.



OAG/IATA deal

GLOBAL travel data provider OAG and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) have strengthened their partnership via a new data tie-up.

Comprehensive data supplied by OAG's new cloud platform will help power IATA's Airport IS market intelligence tool, while the Association will also be provided with a customised version of OAG's Analyzer tool, which will be offered as part of a bundle alongside Airport IS and other existing tools in the future.

HK tourism funding

FINANCIAL Secretary of Hong Kong Paul Chan has announced a HK\$765 million cash injection for the city's tourism board to restart its struggling visitor economy.

New initiatives fuelled by the funding are set to include multiple promotional activations overseas and a review of its long-term marketing strategy.

THL sales crash, fleet sold

NEW Zealand-based Tourism Holdings Limited (THL) has turned its focus to campervan sales, in light of its rentals being hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The tourism company announced it had increased fleet sales by 89% (1,786 vehicles) and boosted global vehicle sales revenue 132% on the previous corresponding period in order to stabilise its total revenue, which was down by only 1% (NZ\$205.8 million) on the PCP, according to its latest financial report.

The strategy is the result of cash from rentals being cut in half thanks to the pandemic, totalling NZ\$68.8 million for the half, down 54%.

However, it wasn't enough to prop up profits, with THL today posting a loss of NZ\$1.8 million for the six months to the end of Dec 2020, from a profit of NZ\$13.1m in the previous period.

"Tourism Holdings has reduced

debt significantly, in particular over the last six months, and is positioned well to face uncertainty," said Chairman Rob Campbell.

"The manner in which we operate the business and the decisions we make today are critical to the long-term positioning and success of Tourism Holdings."

Chief Executive Grant Webster said THL plans to increase its debt to about NZ\$90 million over the remainder of the fiscal year as it re-invests in its fleet, given the volume of vehicles recently sold.

"We have confidence that we can sell vehicles to generate a profit, based on the sales performance over the last 12 months," Webster said, with THL agreeing to acquire a half-interest in motor vehicle dealer Action Manufacturing from its joint venture partner Alpine Bird Manufacturing for NZ\$9 million.

Pass is here to stay

THE benefits of the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) new digital Travel Pass, scheduled to go live next month (**TD** 24 Feb), could hold utility for the global travel sector well after the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided.

Speaking during a recent media briefing, IATA's Regional Director Airport, Passenger, Cargo & External Relations - Asia Pacific Vinoop Goel said the technology could incorporate documents which are administered offline, such as the Yellow Card which is used by some governments to prove travellers have been vaccinated for yellow fever.

"Once we get over the COVID challenge, our Travel Pass enables the industry to look at all types of data requirements and whether they can be modified and take advantage of pax with a digital identity...like medical certificates which can then be shared with airlines & governments," he said.

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Silversea is pleased to **EXTEND** our Bonus Commission offer of **AU\$270** when you make a new booking on any sailing between **1 October 2021 to 30 June 2022**.

Bonus Commission will be **paid 30-45 days after a deposit is received**. Bonus Commission bookings must be confirmed between **18 February and 30 April 2021**.

A SELECTION OF APPLICABLE VOYAGES

DATE	NIGHTS	FROM/TO	SHIP
03 Jan 22	15	AUCKLAND TO SYDNEY	<i>Silver Muse</i>
19 Jan 22	15	CAIRNS TO SYDNEY	<i>Silver Shadow</i>
03 Feb 22	15	SYDNEY TO AUCKLAND	<i>Silver Shadow</i>
18 Feb 22	15	AUCKLAND TO SYDNEY	<i>Silver Shadow</i>
05 Mar 22	15	SYDNEY TO AUCKLAND	<i>Silver Shadow</i>
20 Mar 22	15	AUCKLAND TO SYDNEY	<i>Silver Shadow</i>
04 Apr 22	16	SYDNEY TO CAIRNS	<i>Silver Shadow</i>

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NOTE: Bookings for cruises sailing between 1 July and 30 September 2021 (Q3) qualify for the previously announced Bonus Commission, only if made before 28 February 2021. *Terms and conditions apply

CORPORATE UPDATE

Thrive not survive: FCM

ONE of Flight Centre Travel Group's major global business travel divisions has revealed it is "heavily investing" in new products and fast-tracking technology in order to improve customer experience and make it even more competitive when the pandemic eventually ends.

FCM Travel Solutions indicated it has landed a number of big account wins globally on the back of the strong investment from its parent group Flight Centre, which includes its largest ever account, a company operating in more than 72 markets, as well as its first ever UK Government win.

Despite the brand's parent recording an 88% decline in Total Transaction Value (TTV) for the six months to 31 Dec 2020 to \$1.5 billion (TD 25 Feb), FCM has posted strong sales since the start of Jan 2021, revealing \$294 million of implemented business, funds that are tipped to generate

Compliance solutions

EXPENSE management company SAP Concur has introduced two new solutions to the market that it believes will allow Australian and New Zealand business travel teams to better handle the "ever-evolving compliance requirements" that businesses face.

Concur Tax Assurance by VATBox offers automated artificial intelligence and machine learning technology to assist businesses to better manage the complex world of service taxes that vary from country to country, which can be difficult to track when expensing trips across multiple legs.

The product is dynamically updated in real time and is intuitive in keeping tabs on updates to tax regulations.

Meanwhile the Detect by Oversight solution aims to reduce the risk of errors and fraud by simplifying an organisation's expense audit program.

further investment and growth opportunities.

"Our strategy is not only to survive, but to thrive," said FCM Global MD Marcus Eklund.

"FCM's priority throughout these challenging times has been to support our customers and give them confidence in the strength of our business in the long term.

"We took the decision to continue investing in sales, implementation, account management and solution design to ensure we were there for our customers when they needed us and we also continued to win record amounts of new business globally, which is a testament to FCM's agile, flexible approach and culture," Eklund added.

The corporate travel business is also spruiking the significant investment in its new FCM user platform that enables a more seamless and integrated for business travellers.

"[The platform] is integrated all in the once place, giving you the ultimate choice to plug and play your way," the company said.

CWT inks AA NDC

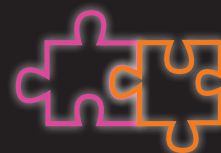
TRAVEL management platform CWT has teamed up with Amadeus to launch its first GDS sourced New Distribution Capability (NDC) transaction capability with American Airlines.

CWT's Vice President of Product Management, Mobility & Payments Erik Magnuson labelled the move "another innovative milestone" for the company.

"During the COVID travel hiatus, CWT has continued to drive innovation for its clients, working closely with like-minded travel distribution and airline partners, and this latest milestone reinforces the company's belief that such relationships result in the best outcome for the industry and for the customer shopping experience," the company said.

NEED A DISTRACTION AMID THE DOOM AND GLOOM?

Check out our daily puzzle page.



Travel Daily

CT connecting once again



IN WHAT is hopefully a sign of things to come, CT Connections' Melbourne team finally got to interact personally with its suppliers and partners recently, including United Airlines.

The team was given an overview of UA's focus for 2021, with United Airlines having played an integral part in helping repatriate Australians from the United States, with seat availability still remaining for those looking to travel back from the United States next month.

Pictured are UA National Accounts Manager Richard Carrick, CT Head of Partnerships & Strategy Ryan Potts, CT Head of Projects & Technology Phil Gleeson, CT Solutions Managers

Anke Charalambous and Ingrid de Haan and CT Business Development Manager Andrew Frederick.

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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?

This statue is the national symbol of the city where it is

located and depicts a mythical creature.

It has been located in a few different places over time and today there are six different versions of it located around the city.

Test your knowledge

FOR travel, flying is a key part of our industry, and it's also full of symbols and acronyms.

Agents have to know airport codes, airline codes, airline liveries and more.

How well do you know the aviation industry? Do you know what airports these codes stand for, and what plane liveries are pictured?

AIRPORT CODES

1. PEK
2. TIP
3. OOL
4. MCM

2



AIRLINE LIVERIES



3



Pub quiz

1. Which three cities have served as the capital of the United States?
2. In which decade was Bombay renamed Mumbai?
 - a) 1980s
 - b) 1990s
 - c) 2000s
3. Despite its name, where in California is New Orleans Square located?
4. Romania's capital Bucharest is so close to which other country that it may as well be in it!?
5. You would find the Royal Concertgebouw in what city?
6. The Theme Building is an iconic Space Age structure located at what airport?
7. Which two countries use the won as their currency?
8. In which city can you find the Vizcaya Museum & Gardens?
9. Which airport boasts the largest terminal, which is also the second-largest building in the world by floor space?
10. Which city occasionally goes by the nickname "Capital of Second Chances"?
11. What US city is this collection of pictures spelling out?

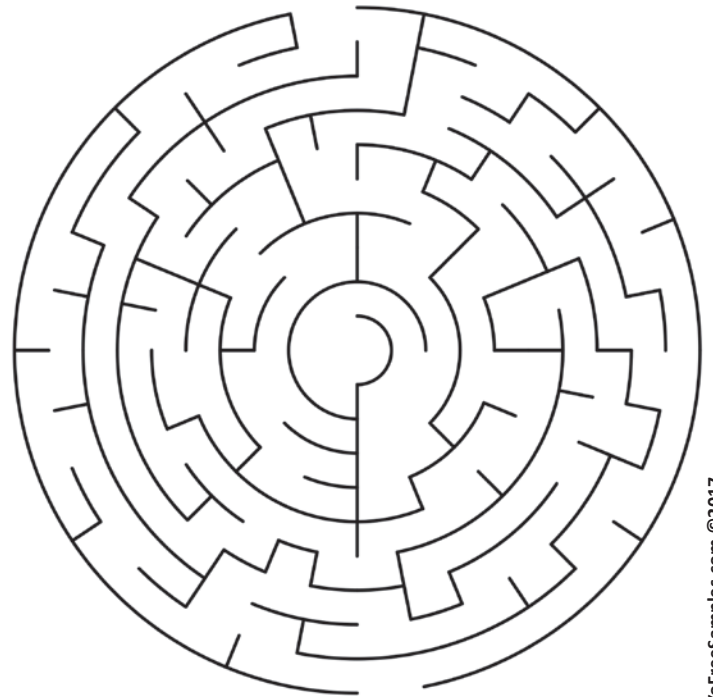


+



A-maze-ing

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



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ANSWERS 25 FEB

Whose flag is this: Hungary

Know your brands: 1 WhatsApp, 2 Rocky Mountaineer, 3 Nestlé, 4 Bendigo Bank

Whose animal is this: Gallic rooster - France



Six star glamping?

PLANS have been hatched for Queensland's first six-star eco-tourism resort to be located on the South Stradbroke Island, according to media reports.

A development application is about to be lodged with the Gold Coast City Council for Pandana South Stradbroke Island, *The Gold Coast Bulletin* revealed, which would be located at the site of the former function venue McLarens Landing.

A group of Australian investors have unveiled plans to create more than 40 "eco-friendly luxurious glamping tents" along 230 metres of west-facing beachfront, each with individual bathroom facilities.

The plan also includes multiple food and beverage venues.

SC marketing push

EIGHT sub-regions of the Sunshine Coast have launched individual tourism campaigns this week as part of the region's over-arching COVID-19 Response Marketing Program.

Caloundra, Kawana, Mooloolaba, Maroochydore, Hinterland, Nambour, Coolum and Eumundi have all put together their own tailored marketing pushes which will run across radio, print, online, digital and social media, mostly targeting the growing interstate drive segment.

"Our team has come up with some exciting activities including new discovery trails and destination videos," said Coolum Business and Tourism President Mark Cameron.

TRAVEL SPECIALS

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

Savings of up to US\$1,000 per couple are available on the Celebrate the 70s Themed Cruise with **American Queen Steamboat Company**. Deals are valid for bookings by the end of Mar, with the cruise to sail aboard the 417-guest *American Queen*. To book, travel advisors can call Cruise Traveller, the Australian representative for the *American Queen*, on 1300 680 374.

Book a **Norwegian Cruise Line** voyage today and receive five free offers, including a beverage package and more. Offering up to US\$2,900 in value, other offers include a free specialty dining package, free shoreside excursion credit and more - **CLICK HERE** to book now.

Book a surf destination with **Airnorth** with the Surfs Up Sale. Valid for flights to Cairns, Perth and Townsville, fares start from \$255 one-way. **CLICK HERE** to book a flight.

River cruise line **Emerald Cruises** has released 2022 Super Earlybird Offers, through to the end of next month. The offer includes savings of up to \$6,000 per couple on voyages in Europe and Southeast Asia. Call your travel agent or Emerald on 1300 892 708.

A LUXURY wilderness camp located in Australia's Red Centre has revealed the dates for guests to meet the artists from the Ernabella Arts Community in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara.

Baillie Lodges' Longitude 131° has been running the popular program for a few years now, with Indigenous artists arranged for five three-day visits this year across the months of Apr, Jun,

Aug, Oct and Nov.

Ernabella Arts Inc is a thriving arts community that aims to ensure the preservation of Indigenous art heritage and culture, with artistic creations like colourful ceramics, canvases, tiles and spears dazzling guests at the luxury resort each year.

Proceeds generated from the artwork, many of which are for sale in the boutique, contributes directly to the community's sustainable economic growth.

Pictured: Famed Indigenous artist Langaliki Lewis.

Saudi tourism splash

SAUDI Arabia is continuing its aggressive push into the tourism market, this week announcing the launch of a new investment fund for the Asir region that will lead the development of US\$3 billion worth of new luxury tourism infrastructure.

The Saudi Government plans to transform the mountainous destination into a major tourism hub boasting 2,700 hotel rooms and 30 unique entertainment attractions by 2030.

If the plan is realised, the investment fund would cultivate US\$2 trillion of tourist assets under management and cater to two million visitors annually.

Dance to our tune

OCEANIA Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises have signed a new deal with Queensland Ballet for 2021 which will see guests and agents gain access to invite-only dance experiences.

"There is a natural synergy between Oceania Cruises, Regent Seven Seas Cruises and Queensland Ballet, our leading upper premium - and luxury cruise lines - offer some of the most electrifying entertainment at sea," a spokesperson for the Norwegian Cruise Lines Holdings-owned brands said.

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