

## Today's issue of TD

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

## Hurtigruten New Year expedition sale

**HURTIGRUTEN** Cruises is offering savings of up to \$1,500 per cabin on 2021, 22 and 2023 cruises as part of a New Year Global Expedition sale which has launched this morning.

Deals include the popular flight-inclusive offer ex Australia to Antarctica leading in at just \$10,999 per person twin share, along with voyages in other global destinations including Alaska & Canada, the Northwest Passage, the Americas, Norway, the British Isles, Greenland, Svalbard and Iceland.

For bookings confirmed by 31 Jan, any future cancellations for any reason will be fully refunded within 14 days - see **page seven**.

## No budging on grants

### EXCLUSIVE

**THE** Government has confirmed that it will not be changing arrangements around the controversial \$128m COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program (**TD** 01 Dec), according to an update from Shadow Tourism Minister Don Farrell.

Farrell noted that "despite warnings from the peak body and individual agents, [the scheme] is producing vastly unfair results across different agencies, and leaving others out altogether".

Payments under the program, which AFTA has described as "deeply flawed," are based on the statistical G1 figure included in Business Activity Statements - however it has now emerged that there are key differences in how this is reported leading to identical agencies receiving widely disparate grants ranging from \$0 through to \$100,000.

Farrell said he had urged former Tourism Minister Simon Birmingham to review the program as a matter of urgency.

"However I have since received a response...indicating the Government will not budge on this issue, citing a desire to deliver the program as soon as possible," he said.

"Given this disappointing response I will write to the new Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Hon Dan Tehan MP, and urge him to reconsider".

Industry advocate Jo Francis from WA agency Global Travel Solutions has urged the industry to continue to lobby Treasurer Josh Frydenberg as well as local MPs, saying based on a Ch 7 *Sunrise* appearance yesterday, it appears Frydenberg is unaware that nearly 65% of agents will "receive next to nothing" from the targeted support.

## QR imposes cc fee

**QATAR** Airways has advised travel agents in Australia and New Zealand that effective from 01 Feb 2021 it will implement a 3% credit card surcharge.

The new impost will apply to bookings by travel agents using their own credit cards, virtual credit cards or any other credit cards which have not been pre-approved by the carrier.

QR said the initiative is part of IATA's Resolution 890, adding that it was responding to a rise in the use of agent credit cards in contravention of the rules.

Some agents have questioned the move as potentially being illegal in Australia, noting the introduction of new Reserve Bank rules five years ago prohibiting credit card surcharges in excess of the direct cost of the payment method (**TD** 27 May 2016).

Qatar Airways wasn't able to comment on the issue before **Travel Daily's** deadline today.

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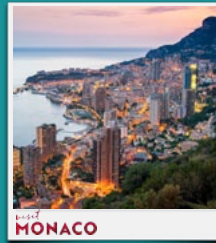
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## VA ups flexibility

**VIRGIN** Australia has extended its free booking flexibility offer for travel until 30 Jun.

The change fee-free extension is available on any of the carrier's bookings made through to Mar, with Virgin supporting the offer with 300,000 sale fares available from 4pm until 11pm today AEDT, unless sold out prior.

## SIA raises US\$500m

**SINGAPORE** Airlines has raised US\$500 million via its first US dollar-denominated bond issue.

The issuance was oversubscribed, with funds raised to be used for aircraft purchases, related payments and other general purposes including refinancing of existing borrowings.

SIA has now raised approximately S\$13.3 billion in liquidity from the start of the 2020/21 financial year, as it responds to the travel shutdown.

## Change at the top for TTC

**THE** Travel Corporation's (TTC) operations in Australia will be led by Executive Director Dave Hoskings from 02 Mar, when CEO Fiona Dalton steps down from the senior role (**TD** breaking news).

Dalton has been with TTC since 2016, initially as MD of Uniworld Boutique River Cruises before also taking on the overall CEO role last year after a sabbatical to study and spend time with her family (**TD** 07 Feb 2020).

TTC Global CEO Brett Tollman said "Fiona has consistently delivered superior results over the past five years for Uniworld in Australia, and we were excited to have her step into the CEO role last Sep.

"However we recognise that the world has changed immeasurably since Fiona's appointment was announced, and we subsequently respect Fiona's decision to resign for personal reasons," he said.

Dalton said "stepping down

from this coveted role and from a company as exceptional as TTC is one of the most difficult career decisions I'll ever make.

"However the impact of COVID-19 has irrevocably changed many of us, and for me it has ignited my desire to consider my next chapter."

Tollman said the CEO role would be assumed by TTC Executive Director David Hosking, who will "work with the company's talented Australian executive team to execute and drive its recovery strategies".

He also confirmed the promotion of Alice Ager to become General Manager of Uniworld Australia, reporting directly to Hosking and Uniworld President Ellen Bettridge.

Tollman said Ager's new role "reinforces our commitment to the brand, to the market and the value we place in succession planning for our people".



## Window Seat

**EVEN** some of the world's great tourist attractions are going through a tough time, with news that The Tower of London's "queen" raven is missing and feared dead.

Merlina (**pictured**), joined the tower's official rave back in 2007, but has now been missing from her duties for some weeks.

Charles II was the first monarch to decree ravens be kept at the tower at all times, and legend has it, if the entire flock were ever to leave, it was a sign the kingdom would fall.



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## CORPORATE UPDATE

### Business travel set to shrink



**THE** corporate travel market is expected to undergo a structural reset of 10-20% once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides, according to an expert panel at this week's CAPA Live conference.

Led by Ord Minnett analyst John O'Shea, the session also featured Neil Glynn, MD of Credit Suisse and procurement professional Jen Barclay from NARTA International, who was also formerly Contracting Manager at Helloworld Travel Limited.

The trio (pictured) gave their assessment of the current landscape, with Glynn saying the behaviour of corporates had changed, with travel policies likely to be tightened post COVID-19.

He particularly expects a big drop in travel for internal company purposes, forecasting a decline of 33% amid a greater focus on return on investment.

However customer-focused trips are less likely to be impacted long term because "the competitive

forces are very powerful...there is no substitute for face-to-face meetings," Glynn said.

A subdued outlook is expected in the short-term, with business travel unlikely to resume to any great extent until COVID-19 vaccines are widely rolled out, O'Shea said, noting he expects no significant improvement until the fourth quarter of 2021.

Barclay also foreshadowed a need for airline policies to change, particularly traditional fare structures which penalise travellers for making bookings close to departure.

"Lead times for bookings are shortening significantly, and businesses don't want their money tied up in unused tickets."

The panel forecasts more consolidation in the TMC space, with first movers who had been able to invest in technology likely to snap up rivals with a strong market position and a "high quality reliable customer base".



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## A quarter of staff let go

**ONE** in four workers in the Asia-Pacific's travel and tourism sector say they have been made redundant in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19, according to the latest data in the *ACI Report 2021*, compiled by recruitment & training firm ACI HR Solutions.

The study of 829 people employed in the travel, tourism & hospitality industries also found that half of all staff experienced pay cuts, with 28% seeing their pay slashed by 50% or more, while 36% said their earnings dwindled by between 25-50%.

Disappointingly, one in 10 workers said they remain unemployed after being let go, while almost a quarter of staff recruiters expected to make further staff cuts in 2021.

The most vulnerable group of workers have so far proved to be those aged between 54 and 65, making up 53% of the total people retrenched, while employees who have been with their company for less than five years were significantly impacted, comprising 83% of all staff let go.

Not surprisingly, 2020 was not

strong for salary growth, with only 28% of travel and tourism workers stating they had received some form of pay increase during the 12-month period, a large drop on the previous year which saw 65% of employees gain some form of salary uplift.

One of the more dire findings of the report found one in five workers had "lost confidence" in the industry entirely, stating they would no longer pursue a career in the sector, with most electing to pivot toward careers in the technology/IT, healthcare and education sectors.

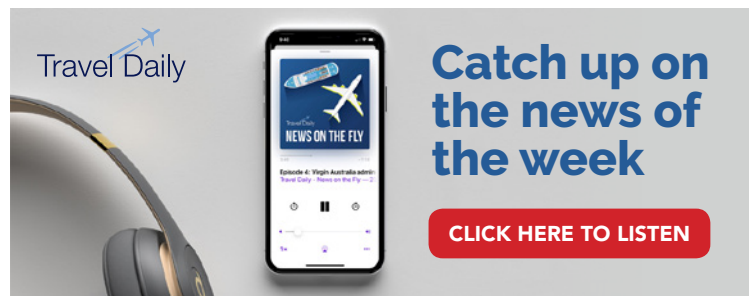
On a positive note however, most respondents felt their employers had handled the COVID-19 crisis well, with measures used in the study referring to internal communication, staffing strategies, support services, as well as various health and safety policies implemented.

The breakdown noted 56% of staff rated their company as "good" or "excellent" in handling the pandemic, while 28% said they had handled it only "fairly".

**YEAR  
in REVIEW**

**2020**

Travel Daily



## How long does our piece of string need to be?

### OPINION

Ben Caplan is the Managing Director of Wall Street Travel.

Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to [feedback@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:feedback@traveldaily.com.au).



**THE** 31 Mar cliff is going to occur in less than 80 days. For those who think they can survive until the post-vaccine world, it would seem now is the time to commence formulating survival plans for the post-JobKeeper and tenant's code of conduct world.

It appears that international travel bubbles are no longer on anybody's agenda, nor is the possibility of domestic travel for leisure or business going to be possible in near terms as states

continuously shut borders to other states.

From reading the press it would appear that the Federal Government plan is to have all Australians vaccinated by sometime in Oct.

It is possible the travel industry still has 300 days before international borders will reopen.

That said, we have already endured approximately 300 days since the Australian borders closed. Is this the halfway point? How many businesses can survive 600 days of zero revenue?

I have called on AFTA before and I'm doing it again. AFTA, can

you please make the following representations, (to obtain some type of guidance), if the vaccination program is completed in Oct, what is the expectation of when international travel can

recommence and on what basis?

For example, will travel only be permitted to countries that have ...? etc. A further suggestion is that the Federal Government outline its expectation of a timeline for opening the international

borders and you suggest that this should be used as a guide only, but the government will provide 60 days' notice of opening when plans are more definite.

While AFTA is talking to the Federal Government, can you please point out that the Australian travel industry is unable to trade due to Government decree?

Plus, JobKeeper should be retained and increased at the original levels for travel agents/industry. Please make it very clear, unlike most businesses in Australia, we are not yet able to trade at 80%, 70%, 60% of pre-COVID revenue, we are basically at zero due to the government decree.

Finally, can AFTA mobilise the industry to contact local members to outline these two issues and galvanise support from the accommodation and aviation sectors who will have similar self-interests in the outcomes.

“How many businesses can survive 600 days of zero revenue?”

### APT suspends

**APT** Travel Group has suspended all international touring and cruises, excluding Australia to New Zealand departures, until the end of Mar.

The Group is offering a future holiday credit equal to the full amount paid for the booking, valid for any APT Group tour or cruise up until the end of 2023, including APT, Botanica, Travelglo, or Travelmarvel sailings.

The credit is also applicable for multiple bookings for the same traveller if desired, and can be transferred to another person, but is not redeemable for cash.

### Border cooperation

**BORDER** constraints have forced two tour operators on either side of the New South Wales-Victoria border to start working together.

Sydney-based Cocky Guides and Melbourne's Wandering the World are helping each other continue to deliver accessible day trips for the visually impaired by servicing each other's customer demands until borders open.

### Cooks NZ bubble

**AIR** New Zealand has confirmed it will commence operations between Rarotonga in the Cook Islands and Auckland next week, as the first step of a phased approach to introducing a two-way travel bubble between the two countries.

Air New Zealand will operate two A320 flights per week, departing RAR each Wed and Sat with incoming passengers able to avoid quarantine on arrival in Auckland.

### RCI to Barbados

**ROYAL** Caribbean International (RCI) has announced the launch of new cruises from Barbados, with *Grandeur of the Seas* to sail three itineraries starting 05 Dec to the southern Caribbean.

The seven- and 14-night journeys will include three new ports of call of St. Vincent, Tobago and Trinidad.

Week-long sailings will island-hop to a different destination every day, or offer late-night stays in the famed ABC islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao.

### Qld small biz boost

**SMALL** businesses in the travel and tourism space in Queensland are now able to access \$2,000 worth of training to help them deal with the ongoing impact of the travel shutdown.

Part of the Qld Govt's Small Business Online Training Program, participants can access a range of online courses for free hosted by experts from Navii Digital, teaching important tips around website design, social media and digital marketing.

For more details, [CLICK HERE](#).

### Qld indigenous lift

**THE** Queensland Government has announced \$200,000 in funding to support the state's indigenous tourism sector, including cash for festivals, events and more job creation.

"We're looking to invest in innovative events and festivals that encourage off-season tourism and help local communities to thrive," said Queensland Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe.

### Only one will survive says Joyce

**QANTAS** CEO Alan Joyce has done little to dampen an ongoing war of words with rivals VA and Regional Express, telling a Reuters panel (*TD* yesterday) only one of its competitors would survive in a post-pandemic market.

"My personal view is that this market has never sustained three airline groups and it probably won't into the future," he said, adding it can be guaranteed QF will be one of the survivors.

### Dive biz owes \$1m

**AFTER** closing down its operations in Mar following the sudden passing of its founder Peter Boundy, Cairns Dive Centre has filed for liquidation owing creditors more than \$1 million, *The Cairns Post* reports.

Decretum Pty Ltd, trading as the Cairns Dive Centre, appointed John Goggin to be its liquidator, with filings showing a total list of liabilities amounting to \$2.2m, with total assets only coming to approximately \$1 million.



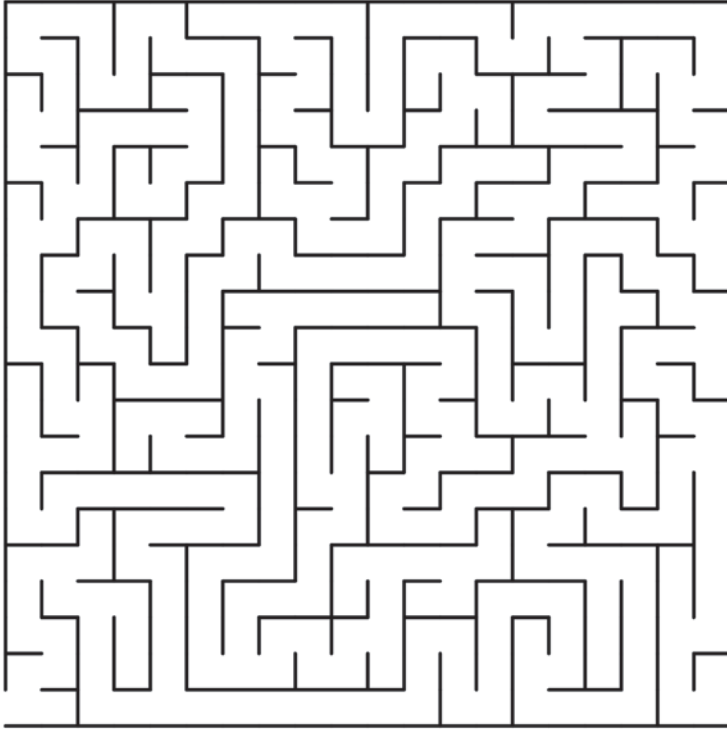
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## A-maze-ing

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Start at the top right corner and finish in the bottom left.



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## Pub quiz

1. Which city was the capital of French Indochina for 43 years?
2. What is the most visited country in the Caribbean?
3. Indonesia's flag bares a confusing amount of similarity to which other country's flag?
4. Which cruise line created the world's largest cruise ship Lego model, of one of its ships, to sit in Hong Kong's Kai Tak Cruise Terminal?
5. What is the capital of Brazil?
6. The Flinders Chase National Park is located in which Australian state?
7. Former budget airline FlyAsianXpress, or FAX, is now known as what?
8. Which American state is known as the Beehive State?
9. Which Australian Valley markets itself as the 'Sapphire Coast'?
10. The United States' acquisition of Alaska from the Russian Empire in 1867 occurred for how much in US dollars?
  - a) \$720
  - b) \$720,000
  - c) \$7.2 million

## 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 rock-cut architecture is the perfect example of what this city is famous for.

## 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. SGN
2. ROK
3. CDG
4. KIK

2



### AIRLINE LIVERIES

1



3



### ANSWERS 14 JAN

Whose flag is this: Greece

Know your brands: 1 Under Armour, 2 Menulog, 3 Royal Caribbean International, 4 ANZ bank

Whose animal is this: Siberian Tiger - South Korea



### Aurora pre-rego for Antarctica sales

**AURORA** Expeditions has opened pre-registration for its Antarctic 2022/23 voyages.

Travellers can register their interest in the program and sign up to be first in line for earlybird promotions when bookings open mid next month, as well as gain access to itineraries and prices.

Celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, the 2022/23 season marks the highest number of trips Aurora has operated in one Antarctic season, with 26 departures running across *Greg Mortimer* and the upcoming *Sylvia Earle* (CW 12 Nov 2020).

Pre-registration closes at 5pm AEDT on Australia Day, 26 Jan - **CLICK HERE** for further information and to pre-register.

### Two Queens deal

**CREATIVE** Cruising has announced the launch of its Cunard Two Queens package.

Combining the *Queen Mary 2* and *Queen Victoria* on back-to-back journeys across Europe and the United States, travellers can take part in either the Norwegian Fjords to NYC itinerary or the NYC to Greece & Gondolas journey.

Packages include air, luxury hotels and more, with travellers from Norway to cruise to Southampton aboard *Queen Victoria*, where they will then transfer to *Queen Mary 2* for a trans-Atlantic crossing to New York City.

The package includes US\$1,600 of ship credit for the first Norwegian Fjords to NYC voyage, and US\$1,700 per stateroom for the NYC to Greece/Gondolas trip.

**ITHAAFUSHI** - The Private Island (pictured), by Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi, launched on Tue as the largest private island resort in the Maldives, spanning 32,000m<sup>2</sup>.

The island features a modern design with a nod to traditional Maldivian charm, and is located in close proximity to Male, the country's capital.

Guests who stay here are escorted directly to Ithaafushi via either a 40-minute ride on one of the resort's six luxury Princess

yachts, or by a 15-minute seaplane flight.

Ithaafushi accommodates 24 guests across two villas and one four-bedroom residence, all of which are serviced by Waldorf Astoria Ithaafushi's Personal Concierge team.

The private island also features a dedicated culinary division, offering a bespoke menu, which is in addition to Waldorf Astoria Ithaafushi's 10 specialty dining venues like The Ledge and Terra.

Travellers can also explore islands beyond Ithaafushi, with direct access available via an exhilarating speed boat ride.

## 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](mailto:specials@traveldaily.com.au)

Savings of up to 10% on all sailings are currently available with **Virgin Voyages**. Deals also offer US\$4,000 in onboard credit, with an additional US\$100 included when travellers pre-purchase a bar tab. Book now by **CLICKING HERE**.

Australia's **Ovolo Hotels** is enticing travellers with a staycation via a new Friends with Benefits offer. Valid until the end of Jan for stays across the year, the deal offers 25% off a two-night stay, plus a bottle of vino and chocolates upon check-in. Book a room **HERE**.

Save \$200 per person with **Explore Worldwide** when booking a small group trip or self-guided tour. Valid for tours departing before 31 May 2022, travellers must book and pay their down payment before this Thu to access the deal. Speak to Explore on 1300 363 055.

Hawaiian hotel operator **Aqua-Aston Hospitality** is offering 15% off rooms and free upgrades at its newly opened Kauai resorts. The offer includes Aston at Poipukai and Aston Islander on the Beach. Make a reservation at [www.aquaaston.com](http://www.aquaaston.com).

### US travel on edge

**IN A** clear sign that the threat of violence in the US capital of Washington DC is ever-present in the lead up to Joe Biden's inauguration next week, accommodation platform Airbnb has opted to cancel all reservations in the city.

The move follows consultation with law enforcement that is intent on limiting the number of visitors coming into the city after reports of "armed militias" on the move to disrupt proceedings.

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has also warned Aussies not to travel to the US due to the prospect of "widespread protests and demonstrations".

### Disney's Magical Express to close

**WALT** Disney World Resort has announced that its express form of transport to and from Orlando International Airport, the Magical Express, will be discontinued from 01 Jan 2022.

The theme park said it would continue to offer the free shuttle service for any new or existing bookings taken during 2021.

Disney also noted the motivation to cut the service was partly due to the wave of new flexible ride-share transport options available to visitors.

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