

New Mossman GM

RACHAEL Hodges has been appointed as the new General Manager of Mossman Gorge Centre, the Voyages Indigenous Tourism operation at the gateway of the Far North Qld Mossman Gorge World Heritage site.

Hodges is of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, and has worked at the Centre as Operations Manager since 2012.

EK resumes Venice

EMIRATES will resume non-stop services between Dubai and Venice from 01 Jul, under new testing arrangements allowing quarantine-free travel between the United Arab Emirates and Italy.

The new "COVID-Tested flight" agreement will also see EK's Milan flights increase to 10 weekly, including a daily service on the Dubai-Milan-NY route and three weekly non-stop flights between the cities.

Today's issue of TD

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

Former CATO chair dead

ROD Eather, who headed up Mauritius wholesaler Beachcomber Tours for two decades prior to its closure six years ago (**TD** 20 Apr 2015) has been found dead beside his wife north of Brisbane, in what police are describing as a double suicide.

Eather, who died aged 66, was also well known to the industry having been Chairman of the Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) for five years, prior to the appointment of his successor, current CATO Chair Dennis Bunnik from Bunnik Tours.

His tragic death came a few days after he was charged with historic sex offences in NSW, relating to his pre-travel career as a teacher in Ballina in the state's north.

In Mar this year police commenced an investigation into reports that a female student aged between 13 and 16 had been sexually assaulted by a teacher between 1981 and 1983.

The probe culminated in Eather being arrested by Qld police at his Morayfield home and extradited to appear in Lismore Local Court last Thu 27 May.

Bail was opposed by the police prosecutor, but Magistrate Jeff Linden granted Eather's release under strict conditions after his solicitor noted that he was the full-time carer for his wife of 28 years, who suffered from debilitating depression.

He was permitted to return to his Qld home, and the matter was scheduled for another hearing in Lismore on 27 Jul.

However Eather and his wife Joan were found dead on Sun, according to the *Northern Star*.

"Police will prepare a report for the coroner following the sudden death of a 66-year-old man at Morayfield on 30 May," Queensland Police confirmed.

"His death is not being treated as suspicious," with the pair leaving a note at the scene.

They leave behind two daughters aged in their 20s.

Eather's extensive travel career, which also saw him manage ski resorts in Austria after he retired from teaching in 1987, ended when Beachcomber, which operates a number of high-end properties in Mauritius, switched its distribution strategy away from a wholesale model amid the rise of the internet, which had swallowed a sizeable proportion of his company's sales.

"Travel isn't the fun game it used to be - it ain't like that any more," he lamented when he stepped down from his CATO role.

Silversea cash back

SILVERSEA has extended its cash bonus commission structure, with agents eligible for bonuses of \$270 on local *Silver Muse* and *Silver Shadow* sailings departing between 17 Dec and 04 Apr 2022.

For more info, see **page seven**.



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Vaccinated travel soon?

FEDERAL Health Minister Greg Hunt has indicated a trial program for vaccinated Aussies to travel overseas could happen within six to eight weeks.

Hunt briefed the Liberal Party room yesterday about the results of a taskforce established to examine the prospects of relaxing travel protocols for vaccinated residents, confirming that modelling for a pilot program had commenced this week, according to a report in *The Guardian*.

Sources close to Hunt revealed that travel restrictions may be relaxed or dropped for people vaccinated in Australia when travelling to countries where inoculation rates can be accurately verified, such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Singapore.

"The Minister had previously stated on a number of

occasions that vaccination may bring forward the capacity of vaccinated people to travel," a spokesperson told *Travel Daily*. "Yesterday's advice [to the party room] was consistent with that."

The Federal Government is reportedly also considering implementing a traffic light grading system for returning travellers based on the risk profile of where they have been.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced in Apr that an expert medical committee had been established to determine the feasibility of vaccinated Aussies travelling overseas (**TD** 12 Apr).

"The [committee] will look into the potential of Australians who are vaccinated being able to travel overseas & not have to go into hotel quarantine, potentially even going into home isolation," Morrison said at the time.

Seeking an experienced travel consultant

Traveltoo, a boutique corporate travel agency located in North Sydney/Crows Nest is seeking an experienced travel consultant.

This is a full-time role, with limited after-hours work also required. The ideal candidate will be:

- A multi-skilled international and domestic consultant with excellent customer service and client management skills
 - Experienced in using Travelport/Cross Check and Microsoft 365
 - An existing client following would be a distinct advantage
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If this sounds like the ideal job for you please **CLICK HERE** to email Neil Wood in the first instance.

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Scenic suspensions

SCENIC Group has extended its ongoing suspension of scheduled Europe and Asia river cruises and international tours for Australian and NZ guests through to 01 Sep.

The company has also suspended *Scenic Eclipse* voyages to Central America, South America and Antarctica through until the beginning of 2022.

"This situation is completely out of our control," the company said, noting the COVID pandemic was a Force Majeure event as defined in its terms and conditions.

Future Travel Credit (FTC) vouchers are being offered to passengers impacted by the new cancellations, valued at 100% of the amount paid for each reservation to date.

When the vouchers expire on 31 Dec 2024 guests who choose not to travel can receive a cash refund.

Rex slams Qantas

REX Airlines has launched another major dig at rival Qantas, this time taking out full-page attack ads in newspapers across the country's capital cities citing the number of complaints made about QF's approach to refunds.

"QF pax have highlighted that this includes burying the refund application form deep in an obscure corner of the website & making pax wait for hrs," Rex said.

Rex has also reiterated its own COVID Refund Guarantee which offers a full refund to pax whose plans have been disrupted by COVID for tix bought after 01 Apr.

Sailing pole to pole

HURTIGRUTEN Expeditions has unveiled a 93-day voyage exploring Alaska, the Northwest Passage, Greenland, the Caribbean, the Panama Canal, South America and Antarctica.

The cruise departs 08 Aug 2022 and is priced from \$59,984ppts.

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Japanese merger

JAPANESE regional airlines Airdo Co and Solaseed Air Inc have announced plans to merge operations by Oct 2022.

The decision was made in order to reduce costs through joint aircraft purchasing and maintenance, with the airlines also raising ¥9.5 billion between them to keep operations going.

BA trials IATA Pass

BRITISH Airways will commence trialling the IATA Travel Pass on flights from Heathrow to Geneva and Zurich in Switzerland from this week, the carrier confirmed.

"We know that digital travel passes are part of the solution and they will also play a key role in offering those travelling the reassurance they need before they arrive at the airport," said BA CEO Sean Doyle.

The carrier is also testing digital travel app VeriFLY on a select number of international flights.

Travel now, pay it later

PLAY Travel has launched a new holiday now, pay later option for travel up to the value of \$12,000.

The newly unveiled PlanPlay product aims to deliver travellers a more flexible way to budget, plan and book a holiday, with customers able to pay back the value of the trip in weekly interest-free instalments over a period of two to 12 months.

Play Travel CEO Andrew Paykel said the product is being rolled out in response to a pent-up demand in the country to travel among Australians who may have short-term financial impediments blocking their pathway to booking a holiday.

"Over the past year we've seen the idea of travel completely reinvented due to the pandemic," Paykel said.

"Despite the barriers we've been faced with, including financial, consumers are still eager to get out and explore...

we want to be the gateway to Aussies live their travel dreams."

Data produced internally by Play Travel shows 63% of travellers are more concerned about unexpected expenses when on holiday following the pandemic, while 74% said they would prefer to use a payment plan rather than rely on bank credit cards.

While the interest-free period might make for an inviting option for travellers, it is worth noting that for every instalment payment not met, clients will incur a \$7 late fee, with repayment amounts then recalculated based on the total principal outstanding.

Play Travel is part owned by Australian payment tech company Afterpay, with the business changing its name from LayAway Travel to Play Travel after a 44% stake was purchased by Afterpay-owned investment firm AP Ventures in 2019.



Window Seat

VACCINATION incentives are getting ever-more creative, with a huge response to QF's plan to offer free travel for a year to 10 families (*TD* 31 Mar).

In a contrasting move, a US promoter has gone in a different direction by ramping up prices for unvaccinated fans wanting to attend an upcoming concert.

Florida-based Leadfoot Productions is showcasing a punk rock gig featuring performances by Teenage Bottlerocket, MakeWar and Rutterkin - and it only costs US\$18 per ticket if you've had a COVID-19 vaccination.

However those who are resisting having a jab will pay US\$999.99 each, meaning only the most diehard anti-vaxing punkrockers are likely to attend.

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AW's night at the museum



ADVENTURE World (AW) celebrated its long-standing partnership with the Australian Museum in Sydney last week, taking part in a glittering black-tie event with about 300 of the city's illustrious charity supporters. The special dinner was in

support of the Australian Museum Research Institute and Foundation, with Adventure World MD Neil Rodgers and NSW/ACT Account Manager, Andrea Morgan **pictured** in their glad rags with Kim McKay, Director and CEO of the museum.

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Tripadvisor extends Trip.com alliance

TRIP.COM group and Tripadvisor Inc have announced an expansion of their strategic partnership (**TD** 08 Nov 2019), which will now be part of the new TripAdvisor Plus direct-to-consumer subscription service.

TripAdvisor Plus costs US\$99 per year, offering travellers access to hotel discounts and perks (**TD** 09 Mar 2021) and under the expanded deal with the Chinese-based OTA, Trip.com will "provide access to preferential pricing on at least 10,000 properties".

However the corporate ties between the organisations are loosening, with Trip.com announcing plans to sell a portion of its 6.95 million shares in Tripadvisor in multiple tranches throughout 2021 "to meet its corporate needs".

Trip.com will also relinquish its contractual right to nominate a Tripadvisor director.

Korea pops up

KOREA Tourism Organization Sydney Office will open a Korea Pop Up space at the Westfield shopping centre in Bondi Junction later this month.

The initiative, in place from 14-20 Jun, is part of celebrations of the 60th anniversary of South Korea's diplomatic ties with Australia this year.

It will feature an augmented reality display of Korea's traditional Hanbok clothing, a Nanta non-verbal comedy show, cultural experiences such as craft making, and Taekwondo martial arts performances.

A special Travel Trade Day on Thu 17 Jun will see travel agents and wholesalers who attend receive a special gift, as well as have the opportunity to meet KTO Sydney's Trade Marketing Coordinator.

Registrations for the industry day must be lodged by 07 Jun by **CLICKING HERE**.

STOP DREAMING ABOUT NEW ZEALAND AND GO

Wakey wakey, it's time for a virtual journey and actual flights!

A new day has dawned, the Trans-Tasman Quarantine Free Travel Zone is now open and it's time for us to get reacquainted. Join us for a virtual journey around each region of New Zealand with a chance to win flights during each session.

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Travel Daily

Pub quiz

1. The Echo Park neighbourhood can be found in what major American city?
2. The first Winter Olympic Games were hosted in which French region?
3. Cootharinga is a pink granite monolith located in which Queensland city?
4. Lake St. Clair, Australia's deepest lake, is found in what state or territory?
5. What famous Australian island is known as Wadjemup to the local Noongar people?
6. Which six countries have a coast on the Adriatic Sea?
7. Sofia is the capital of which country?
8. Hinton is considered the gateway to which Canadian National Park?
9. To the nearest hundred, how many bridges are there in Venice?
10. Despite being the target of many thwarted hijackings and terror attacks, this airline, considered one of the world's safest, has only ever been victim to one successful hijacking, an incident that resulted in no fatalities. Which airline is it?

Sudoku

BEGINNER

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

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

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 is just a portion of this large

site which is the largest religious structure in the world by land area.

The complex was built in the early 12th century and is today a symbol of the country it is located in, appearing on the nation's flag.

Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the *TD* Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 15 Aug 2014:

BUDGET travellers are being encouraged to book accommodation via a new "antluxury" website intriguingly titled hovelstay.com.

The company's mission is to list "inexpensive and interesting places to stay for travelling college students," with all listings priced under US\$99.

"Hovels are conveniently located, catering to the college student's lifestyle and budget," the website enthuses.

Hovel Hosts are being invited to "monetise free space" and list their properties for a 1% introductory commission rate.

The concept is likely to grow, with Hovelstay having just secured over \$1 million in venture capital funding from private investors in London and Dubai.

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

ANSWERS 02 JUN
 Pub quiz: 1 Los Angeles, 2 Chamonia-Mont-Blanc, 3 Townsville, 4 Tasmania, 5 Rottnest Island, 6 Albania, 7 Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, 8 Jasper National Park, 9 400, 10 El Al Israel Airlines
 Icon under a microscope: Angkor Wat, Cambodia

An over-whale-ming opportunity



SYDNEYSIDERS touched down in Hervey Bay last week on Jetstar's first direct flight to the popular tourism town located on South-East Qld's sunny coastline.

State representative for Hervey Bay, Adrian Tantari, enthused that the new Jetstar services would help boost the region's flagging visitor economy and show Sydney residents how to have a whale of a time on holidays.

"Sydneysiders looking for a whale of a time are heading north

to Hervey Bay to escape winter and experience our region's breathtaking whale migration," Tantari said.

"Jetstar's direct air link from Australia's biggest capital to Australia's whale watching capital will support 67 local jobs and contribute \$8 million to Hervey Bay's economic recovery.

"Direct flights from Sydney are great news for Hervey Bay's whale watching boats, accommodation providers and local restaurants and cafes."

Qld State Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe added the flights were an extraordinary opportunity for Fraser Coast tourism operators to show the best of their region.

Pictured: Tourists enjoying a whale-watching tours.

Big4 lands big sales

NOT all tourism businesses are doing it tough, with Big4 Holiday Parks forecasting a significant rise in booking sales this year on the back of strong demand for nature-based domestic holidays.

The company's GM Business Development Belinda Thomas told the *Seriously Social* podcast that sales should reach \$80 million by the end of the year.

"It's the level of enquiries that we've seen we just probably didn't foresee," Thomas admitted.

"We've had over five million web visitors in the last six months and we expect that to exceed 10 million for the year," she added.

Digging deeper

69 TOURS has released a new set of adventure packages in Melbourne this Sep.

The 69 Digs tour is a unique, all-inclusive, multi-day travel experience aimed to drive tourists back to Melbourne, with a particular focus on treasure hunting hobbyists - **CLICK HERE**.

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Travel & Cruise Weekly

It's good for the fam

HALF of Australian parents believe they have more patience for their kids when they are on holiday than they do at home, according to new survey from Carnival Cruise Line.

The data also found that limiting screen time and tech was a common desire for travellers, with 42% listing putting down their phones on a trip as a driving factor to book, while 41% wanted more sleep and two in five wanted to do more exercise.

Skal Perth event

SKAL International Perth is hosting a June Education Networking Lunch at Pavilion Restaurant in Joondalup next week in WA.

The event, on the campus of North Metropolitan TAFE, is open to all in the travel & tourism industry, and is being held from 12.30pm on Thu 10 Jun.

Interested parties can register and make payment by **CLICKING HERE** - guest tickets are \$49, members \$39 and students \$25.

ACCOMMODATION

WELCOME to Accommodation Updates, *Travel Daily's* Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.



Located in its namesake destination in North Male Atoll in the Maldives, **The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands** has opened, featuring minimalist architecture inspired by its natural surroundings. Easily accessible via a scenic ten-minute seaplane ride, or a 45-minute luxury boat ride from Velana International Airport, the resort features a private beach club, charming boutiques and tempting eateries, and is ideal for families.



Opening 10 Jun, **White Coast Pool Suites**, located on the volcanic Greek Island of Milos, offers architecture emanating a feeling of "luxurious simplicity". The adults-only boutique hotel offers a complete sense of seclusion and privacy for couples to reconnect with nature and each other, and is a five-to-10-minute drive from most landmarks on Milos. The hotel champions cubist and minimalist design elements to make the most of its setting.



Crystalbrook Flynn is set to open North Queensland's most stylish new wine bar, Whiskey & Wine. The hotel's third on-premises venue will serve drinks from the hotel's rooftop from Fri, with visitors able to soak up the spectacular views across the Coral Sea and out to the mountains of East Trinity. The tropical, art deco-inspired interior features high ceilings, palm leaves, and cane furnishings, all in line with the surrounding regions.

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*Terms and conditions apply.

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