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ETG appointment

MICHAELA Jones has taken on a new position as National Account Manager at Express Travel Group (ETG).

Jones was most recently at Travel Counsellors, which last month exited Australia after 13 years and its members became part of ETG (TD 11 Dec 2020).

New inbound video

THE Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has released an updated version of the video shown to passengers on inbound flights to Australia.

The update to the *Don't be sorry, just declare it* video (TD 04 May 2018) includes new advice about COVID-19 symptoms - see traveldaily.com.au/videos.

Today's issue of TD

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

Five year QF/AA renewal

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has issued a draft determination, proposing to renew authorisation for the Joint Business Agreement between Qantas and American Airlines for a further five years.

The ruling also includes an interim re-authorisation for the pact, which had been set to expire in two weeks' time.

The agreement sees QF and AA coordinate their operations between and within Australia/NZ and the USA, Canada and Mexico.

The ACCC said it believes re-authorising the deal is likely to result in public benefits, including "a greater likelihood of increased capacity and new routes; increased connectivity and improved schedule choice; loyalty program benefits and improved lounge access; and operational efficiencies".

The Commission noted that the operation of the alliance was

still significantly affected by the impact of COVID-19, with the extent to which public benefits are likely to be realised going forward is dependent on the recovery in demand for trans-Pacific services.

The ACCC is now inviting submissions in response to the draft determination, with a 12 Mar deadline and expectations a final ruling will be made within the next two months.

CWN resignation

THE cleanout of the Crown Limited board continues, with the company this morning announcing the departure of Director John Poynton, who is also Chairman of Crown Perth.

CWN executive Chairman Helen Coonan said the move was in response to the recent NSW Govt report which cited Poynton's past relationship with James Packer.

Amadeus tech deals

AMADEUS has announced a new strategic partnership with Microsoft, which will accelerate the move of the GDS firm's technical platform to the cloud.

Microsoft will become Amadeus' preferred cloud provider, while the companies will also jointly focus on innovation and product development for travel solutions and "collaboration to create new hyper-personalised services and industry offerings tailored to the travel ecosystem".

Amadeus has also announced a deal with British Airways' parent International Airlines Group to drive advanced travel retailing via IATA's New Distribution Capability.

The pact means BA, Iberia, Aer Lingus and Vueling NDC travel offers will be available via the Amadeus Travel Platform.

The announcements came alongside Amadeus' full year results report, with revenue down 61% to €2.17 billion and a €302.4 million annual loss.

NCL
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FROM SYDNEY
23 APR 2022



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

FROM PAPEETE
7, 31 MAY & 14 NOV 2022



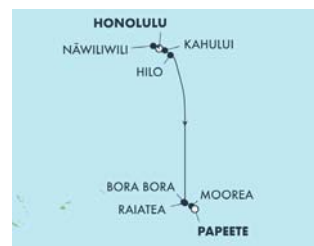
7-DAY SOUTH PACIFIC: BORA BORA, MOOREA & RAIATEA

ROUND-TRIP PAPEETE
31 OCT & 7 NOV 2022



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

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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.



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Rex jets into the sky today

AUSTRALIA now has three carriers operating on its key east coast capital city routes, with Regional Express' highly anticipated 737 jet flights kicking off this morning.

The carrier's route map indicates a phase-in of services from Sydney to Melbourne and Coolangatta, as well as Melbourne-Adelaide.

The launch follows the release late on Fri afternoon of the

Google on the Hub

GOOGLE'S Head of Travel, Michelle Allen, will join *Travel Daily* Publisher Bruce Piper and Richard Taylor of the Travel Community Hub in a special exclusive interview this Fri.

Allen will discuss the latest statistics on travel intentions, consumer sentiment of Aussies & much more - to register for the unmissable session **CLICK HERE**.

carrier's financial results for the six months to 31 Dec 2020, with a \$9.9 million profit for the period.

Passenger numbers declined 71.2% to just over 190,000, with the carrier benefiting from the Regional Airlines Financial Assistance Grant which underwrote a skeleton service to regional and rural destinations.

Excluding the grant funding, Rex reported an underlying operating loss of \$890,000.

Executive Chairman Lim Kim Hai said without the Government assistance Rex would have been forced to shut down 90% of its network, but aeromedical work and charter operations had performed strongly.

The expected cessation of all assistance packages from 31 Mar will mean the group is expected to incur significant losses, with vaccination rollouts not forecast to have an impact on passenger demand until after 01 Jul.

Aurora Aussie plan

AURORA Expeditions is set to operate a new domestic cruise program in Australia, with a full season of "immersive, adventurous and off-the-beaten-track voyages" (*TD* breaking news).

The company is working closely with regulators to get the season up and running, with destinations including Tasmania, the Kimberley, WA's Coral Coast, Ningaloo Reef, Bass Strait Islands and Antarctica, featuring the Ross Sea and Commonwealth Bay.

"These extraordinary regions have never been explored in this way before," said Aurora CEO Monique Ponfoort told *TD*.

"After three decades at the forefront of polar expedition travel, we are beyond excited to be launching a season of incredibly unique expeditions that explore our beautiful island home," she added.

Itineraries will be revealed on Thu, with bookings open 11 Mar.



Window Seat

PORCINE tourism has taken a giant leap forward this week with the announcement of the world's first ever Peppa Pig theme park.

Legoland Florida in the USA confirmed the creation of the new standalone park which will feature rides, interactive attractions, themed landscapes, water play areas and of course plenty of opportunities for fans to be photographed with their favourite cartoon porker and her friends.

Peppa Pig Theme Park will be separately ticketed from Legoland, but two-park passes will also be available, according to operator Merlin Entertainments, which promised that the new park will be "oink-tastic".

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QF signs up to Pass

QANTAS has become the latest airline to join a trial of International Air Transport Association's (IATA) digital Travel Pass, joining Air New Zealand, Singapore Airlines and Qatar Airways, among several others.

IATA recently hinted "a number of airlines" had signed up to the trial, with the group confident the Travel Pass has the potential to speed up a resumption of international travel.

Happy-go-Luckey

ACCOMMODATION wholesaler Stuba has announced the departure of long-serving Chief Information Officer and Pacific Managing Director Mark Luckey.

Serving the brand in the local market for 13 years, Luckey will formally leave the company on 31 Mar to pursue other opportunities, with Anuj Bang to assume the role from 01 Apr.

Paul Groundwater will continue in his role as Head of Sales for Stuba Pacific.

When the Rudd-er hits the road



AUSTRALIAN Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) chief Darren Rudd was on the road again last week, this time meeting with travel agents in the electorate of Bradfield located in Sydney's North Shore to discuss their ongoing financial plight.

An extension of JobKeeper was very much the focus of the



discussions, Rudd said, with AFTA meeting with World Corporate Travel, ACR International Travel, Cali Ventures, Odynovo and Transglobal Travel Services.

AFTA last week revealed the first results of its Travelsectorkeeper survey which showed more than 40% of the industry does not expect to return to profit until 2023 at the earliest (*TD* 23 Feb).

Australia finally lifts 737 Max ban

AUSTRALIA'S Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) has formally lifted the suspension on Boeing's beleaguered 737 Max aircraft from operating flights to and from Australia.

Only two foreign airlines flew the 737 Max to Australia before the COVID-19 pandemic - Singapore Airlines and Fiji Airways - with CASA's acting CEO Graeme Crawford stating the temporary prohibition was a necessary step for Australian travel safety.

"We took early action based on the information we had to ensure our skies remained safe," he said.

Bubble off again

AIR New Zealand was forced to cancel 59 domestic flights today as Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced another lockdown for Auckland following one case of COVID-19, with the trans-Tasman bubble also currently suspended by both countries.

Viking chills savings

VIKING is offering savings of up to \$6,000 per couple on its 13-day Antarctic Explorer voyage, including a \$1,500 per person earlybird payment bonus when booked before 31 Mar.

The cruise departs Jan 2022 and will sail aboard the custom-built Polar Class 6 *Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris* expedition ships.

For more information on the deal, call 138 747.



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Where in the world?



©Ryan Dickey

THIS baseball stadium is sometimes known as “The Friendly Confines”, and is the oldest park used in the country’s national baseball league.

It was designated a national historic landmark last year and is known for its ivy-covered brick

outfield wall and hand-turned scoreboard.

The field is also located in a residential neighbourhood and many people can buy tickets to sit on rooftops with a view of the stadium.

Do you know the name of this stadium and where it is?

Pick the nation

COUNTRIES have unique geography, ethnicities and cultures which come together to often form very distinctive symbols.

Based off the four different symbols and famous faces, see if you can figure out which country they represent.

1



2



3



4



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

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

Whose mascot is this?



BEVO is not just one of the most respected mascots in his sport, but is perhaps one of the world’s most loved bovines.

When Bevo XIV died of cancer five years ago, he was

mourned with funerals across his jurisdiction.

The current Bevo, Bevo XV, has been the team’s mascot since 2016, which marked 100 years of the Bevo mascot.

ANSWERS 26 FEB

Test your airline knowledge: Airport codes - 1 Beijing, China, 2 Tripoli, Libya, 3 Coolangatta, Gold Coast, Australia, 4 Monte Carlo, Monaco, Airline liveries - 1 WestJet Airlines, 2 China Eastern Airlines, 3 SAS Scandinavian Airlines

Pub quiz: 1 New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, 2 b) 1990s, 3 Disneyland, 4 Bulgaria, 5 Amsterdam, 6 Los Angeles International, 7 North Korea and South Korea, 8 Miami, 9 Dubai International, 10 Las Vegas, 11 Burbank (burr + bank)

Icon under a microscope: Merlion, Singapore



Caribbean jaunts

ROYAL Caribbean International has unveiled a new collection of short voyages between Florida and Texas which will stop at a number of popular Caribbean destinations.

The three- to five-night sailings will depart in 2022/23 and visit tropical places like CocoCay and Grand Bahama Island, as well as Nassau, Cozumel in Mexico and Belize City.

There are 17 itineraries to choose from and bookings officially went on sale last week.

Seaworld on guard

A DECISION by the NSW Government to prohibit the breeding or importation of dolphins and other marine mammals may convince Queensland theme parks like Seaworld to do the same, according to advocacy group World Animal Protection.

“This puts mounting pressure on the Queensland Government and Sea World - home to the only dolphin park in Australia continuing to breed dolphins in captivity,” the group said.

On track for recovery



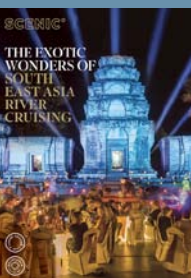
BROCHURES

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.



Grand Pacific Tours NZ Coach Holidays - 2021

A new dedicated 22-page e-brochure has been released by Grand Pacific Tours, showcasing its 11-day Classic North Island Garden Tour which will coincide with the Taranaki Garden Festival in New Plymouth. Departing 27 Oct, the unique trip will travel to many of the North Island's finest public and private gardens and provide an engaging assortment of garden visits, iconic New Zealand culture trips, tourist sights, and beautiful scenery, all on one popular coach holiday. The is priced from \$4,449ppts.



Scenic South East Asia River Cruising 2021/22

Multiple cruise options are on offer along The Mekong and The Irrawaddy rivers inside Scenic's Exotic Wonders of South East Asia River Cruising brochure, including plenty of time to stop and explore many of the region's ancient wonders. Highlights featured include the Luxury Mekong & Temple Discovery Cruise which allows guests to learn more about the art of silk weaving in Cambodia's Koh Dach island, as well as take part in an authentic cooking demonstration in the country's capital Phnom Penh. Prices start from \$6,795 per person, twin share.

THAILAND'S ongoing efforts to restart its tourism economy have been accelerated by the release of the Thailand Plus app, a compulsory tool for tourists to use which will track their movements and provide advice about COVID-19 in real-time.

The app must be downloaded by travellers before arriving in the country, with local businesses like accommodations, restaurants and tourism attractions now requiring tourists to check in and out of locations using the software tool's QR code system.

The Thai Government has been quick to dispel any potential privacy concerns, stating all information will be used for the express purpose of public health.

“All information collected is only used for public health services and monitors tourists in a way that does not infringe on privacy,” a government statement pledged.

Pictured: The skyline of bustling Bangkok at night.

Tourists locked out?

QUEENSLAND'S Moreton Island could see sites like Cape Moreton restricted from tourism under new proposed laws set to go before Qld State parliament.

The plan would see the island shared between the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation, with some tourism operators fearing it could restrict business and make tours unprofitable.

The proposal follows news that the Wollumbin National Park on NSW's far north coast and home to Mount Warning could be permanently closed to tourists, with documents confirming the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is working on a Wollumbin closure strategy due to the area being an Indigenous sacred site.

The region typically attracts around 100,000 tourists a year.

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