

Monaco winners!

SIX lucky agents have been awarded for their participation in the Monaco Government Tourist Bureau's training modules available on **Travel Daily's** Training Academy.

Two advisors were selected for each module, with the six women walking away with exclusive bottles of the Monaco Gin.

The winners included: Gilda McManus, The Cruise Centre by Travelcall Goldman Group; Sarah Knoll, TravelManagers; Christine D'Agostino, Flight Centre; Kirsty McKenzie, TravelManagers; Meg Blakey, Jetsetter Travel and Tracey Herbert from Southlands Travel & Cruise.

Three new Monaco training modules also go live today, accessible **HERE**, with agents who finish all six modules and quizzes to go into the draw to win the ultimate luxury trip for two, including return Business class tickets to Monaco.

QF mystery flights

QANTAS has unveiled three domestic mystery flights designed to inspire Aussies to travel while int'l borders remain closed.

The Boeing 737 services will also include a surprise day of activities in a destination outside of a major capital city, representing the first mystery flights sold by the carrier since the 1990s.

Economy tickets cost \$737 while Business class will set pax back \$1,579, with flights going on sale from 12pm (AEDT) tomorrow.

Borders now closed to Jun

THE three-month extension to 17 Jun of Australia's biosecurity emergency declaration by Health Minister Greg Hunt last night (**TD** breaking news) cites the ongoing COVID-19 situation overseas which "continues to pose an unacceptable health risk to Australia, including the emergence of more highly transmissible variants".

"The extension of the emergency period...is about mitigating that risk for everyone's health and safety," Hunt said, noting the move extends restrictions on outbound international travel, pre-departure testing and mask wearing on international flights,

restrictions on trade of retail outlets at int'l airports, and restrictions on the entry of cruise vessels within Australian territory.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia MD Joel Katz said that after six months of working with govt on a phased resumption of cruising, he was "naturally disappointed" at the latest announcement.

However Hunt's statement did note the ongoing work to develop a cruise framework "in a manner that is proportionate to the public health risk".

MEANWHILE the Business Council of Australia has issued a new report advocating for a risk-based approach to borders, based on the rapid vaccine rollout.

Based on data from consulting firm Accenture, the Council called on National Cabinet to "give people the ability to plan and get on with opening the country back up" - view the full report **HERE**.

Scenic downplays Kimberley season

SCENIC has issued a clarification about the upcoming *Scenic Eclipse* Kimberley Season (**TD** yesterday), confirming that "whilst we have been exploring opportunities to cruise in Australia...any information that is being circulated regarding dates, itineraries or experiences is speculative only".

The move comes despite some travel agents actively promoting the eight-voyage season with departures as soon as 30 May.

The company said it was continuing to review the status of Government permits & regulatory requirements for operations in Australian coastal waters.

QR SYD five years!

QATAR Airways has launched a fare sale today in celebration of the fifth anniversary of the launch of non-stop Sydney-Doha flights.

The special birthday was also accompanied by huge festivities at SYD - see **pages four & seven**.

Today's issue of TD

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

Singapore training

SINGAPORE Airlines is inviting travel advisors to become travel specialists on the destination, with those completing the program by the end of the month receiving entry into the draw to win an all-inclusive trip to the Lion City for two - **CLICK HERE**.



Support
Inventory
Package Rates
EXPEDIA TAAP

We've got your back

www.expedia.com.au/taap
telephone 1800 726 618
email expedia-au@discovertheworld.com.au

..... NCL'S
TAKE 5
US\$2,900 IN VALUE*

CHOOSE 5 X 2 FREE OFFERS*

HURRY, OFFER ENDS 31 MARCH

NCL
Feel Free®
*Conditions apply.

LEARN MORE

QF cancels Mar-Oct flights

QANTAS has adjusted its flight schedules to align with the announcement of its planned resumption of international services on 31 Oct (**TD** 25 Feb), meaning the cancellation of previously booked flights including services to the UK and USA, which were previously on sale for travel from Jul.

The carrier has issued a commercial policy which is applicable to customers holding a valid 081 ticket issued on/before 09 Feb 2021, allowing passengers who elect to retain the value of the ticket in credit to make one free change at time of reissue.

Impacted destinations include ports in the UK, Singapore, USA, South Africa, Chile, Hong Kong, China, Indonesia, Thailand,

Fiji, New Caledonia, PNG and Thailand, as well as Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Queenstown in New Zealand.

The policy applies for any travel previously departing 28 Mar-30 Oct 2021, and notes that "Qantas will not be responsible for paying any other costs or expenses such as hotel or other ground operator fees arising due to events beyond our control, unless required by applicable laws".

QF noted that frequent flyer bookings may not be held in credit, but can be changed or refunded via contact centres.

Options for customers include rebooking to the next available QF operated services, rebooking to a partner operated flight, retaining the ticket in credit until 31 Dec 2023, or a refund.

During last week's Qantas results announcement, CEO Alan Joyce confirmed the carrier's revised plan to recommence international flying to 22 of its previous 25 destinations from the end of Oct, in line with the Government's vaccine rollout timeline which will see the COVID-19 immunisation program "effectively completed" by then.

Princess on track

PRINCESS Cruises' POLAR Online platform has returned to normal service today as the company's 2023 World Cruise goes on sale to the general public, after yesterday frustrating travel agents with long outages.

The highly anticipated itinerary opened to Elite guests yesterday, with massive demand due to agent pre-registrations seeing several outages during the day.

Princess Cruises Director of Sales & Marketing, Nick Ferguson, apologised to agents for the frustrations, confirming an additional \$50 per booking bonus commission due to the extra administration required.

Agents told **TD** this morning's expansion of availability to the wider cruising community had gone smoothly, and thanked Princess for its quick action to resolve the issues.

MEANWHILE Princess Cruises has also today revealed details of its 2022/23 South America and Antarctica programs, with the 2,670-guest *Sapphire Princess* to operate to 19 destinations in 10 countries - details 1300 587 473 or at onesourcecruises.com.au.

Ovolo's Suite ride

OVOLO Hotels is offering its guests a "Suite ride" with Genesis Cars, with the chance to reserve the Genesis G70 for a four-hour complimentary drive.

The partnership is in support of the Holiday Here This Year campaign lead by Tourism Australia, with Ovolo encouraging guests to support local tourism operators and communities as int'l borders remain closed.

Each Ovolo will have a Genesis G70 sports sedan in residence from today until the end of Apr this year, with guests booking direct having the chance to reserve a Suite ride, a four-hour complimentary drive to anywhere from 8.30am to 12.30pm and 1pm to 5pm.

Get your travel business

ship shape

- our buying power,
your product choice.



MTA Advisor Mark Spurway

Let's chat - 1300 682 000 | mtatravel.com.au/joinus



Hertz gets smarter

VEHICLE rental company Hertz is now allowing customers to sign rental agreements via a smart phone or tablet as part of a push to increase its health and safety.

Clients can download contracts on the My Journey Portal **HERE**.

MH nine-year breach

FREQUENT flyer members belonging to Malaysia Airlines may have had their data compromised for nine years, the carrier informed its Enrich members this week.

The major breach is suspected to have involved a third-party IT service provider and included data such as name, date of birth, contact info, frequent flyer member numbers and tier levels.

Payment and reservation details were not believed to have been compromised, the airline said.

Virtually Sth Africa

GOOGLE Arts & Culture and South African Tourism have created a new online exhibition allowing visitors to explore the country through a collection of 500 images and videos, 55 street views and 20 digital stories.

The exhibition is the first phase in a long-term collaboration to celebrate South Africa's landscapes, diverse people, and its rich cultural heritage.

South African Tourism is hoping the exhibition will help speed its tourism recovery - view it **HERE**.



Window Seat

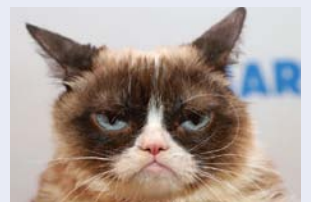
SOMEBODY appears to have let the cat out of the bag and into the cockpit of a Sudan to Qatar flight this week, forcing a return to its departure point after an irate feline attacked the pilots.

Like a cat on a hot tin roof, the furry stowaway who infiltrated the aircraft via a slack cleaning regime pounced around the cockpit at 40,000 feet, clawing and biting its way toward a charge of aviation hijacking.

The Tarco Aviation plane took immediate evasive action by returning back to the Sudanese capital Khartoum, with cabin crew forced to scramble and keep passengers calm during the unusual mid-air event which well and truly threw a cat amongst the pigeons.

Despite the brazen assault, the cat managed to escape and hide on the plane for some time, making the cheeky predator a fur-midable hide and seek competitor before its eventual capture and detainment.

The airline said the kitty was being cooperative and was thankful to avoid a cat-astrophe.



Picture yourself here...

NEVER BEFORE

SUMMER SALE

up to \$1,000

Earn \$50

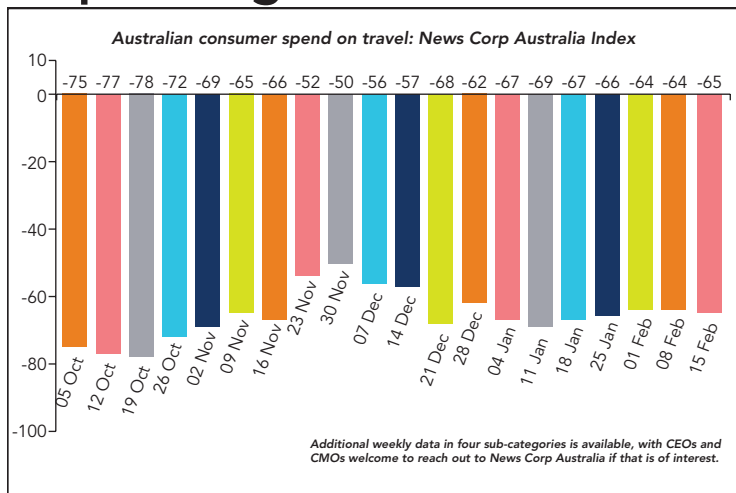
Win a place on a 'Discover the NT' family, and earn \$50* with every sale in the NT Summer Sale.



For more information, visit tourismnt.com.au/summer-sale
* Family includes an amazing experience on The Ghan. Terms and conditions apply.



Spending remains resilient



CIRCUIT-BREAKER lockdowns did not stun consumer confidence too severely, News Corp's latest Australian consumer spend in travel statistics have found.

This reported week ending 15 Feb captured three of Melbourne's five-day lockdown, but with the quarantine period not extended, overall travel spend only dropped by 1% to 65%.

The only category experiencing notable drops were the airline sectors, with the "Airline spend under \$350" category dropping 5%, down a total of 44% YOY.

Airline spend over \$350 also dropped by 4%, down 72% YOY, which Head of Travel Dwayne Birtles attributed to "a knee-jerk reaction" from some Australians when it came to booking their next interstate trip.

"However, it is nowhere near what we saw at the end of 2020 which could see the airline category dropping over 20 percent points with a lock-down announcement," he added.

Also remaining resilient was the cruise sector, which did not budge, down 86% YOY.



Schwartz makes a splash



IHG Hotels and Resorts' Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley resort has opened a new heated water park in a bid to attract more of the domestic family holiday market.

The property, which is managed by IHG and owned by prominent Aussie property tycoon Jerry Schwartz, cut the ribbon on the new attraction this week, a two-storey park featuring an assortment of slides, flutes, showers, water cannons and jets.

The centrepiece of the new area is the "Happy Berry Bucket", dousing people below with more than 1,200 litres of water every

eight minutes.

"The Hunter Valley has perhaps been seen more as a destination for adults wanting to go to wineries, play golf or attend conferences and events, but we've transformed the Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley into a resort for both discerning adults and children," Schwartz said.

"The missing ingredient in the resort's inventory was a water park, and I'm pleased to say this has really added something substantial to the Hunter Valley's tourism attractions," he added.

Pictured: Schwartz with his fam.

Help us discover
chocolate

AROUND THE WORLD

In the lead up to Easter, submit your chocolate recipes from around the world for our weekly feature.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Travel Daily

Keep your clients inspired
with *keep dreaming...*



Content produced
in collaboration with
Qatar Airways

QATAR Airways is reflecting on five years of flying from Sydney today, with the route launching in early Mar 2016 (**TD** 04 Mar 2016).

The destination was the third for the airline in Australia, after Melbourne and Perth, beginning with a daily service operated by a Boeing 777-300ER, which was upgraded to a daily A380 flight in Sep 2016 (**TD** 19 Sep 2016) before a second daily flight was added in Feb 2018 (**TD** 12 Feb 2018), which continues on to Canberra.

Sydney was also the first route in Australia which Qatar Airways flew with its Business Class product, QSuite (**TD** 06 Jul 2018).

Of course, the pandemic has had a huge impact on the carrier over the last 12 months, with a need to evolve and adapt to border restrictions, as well as changes to Qatar Airways' network, adjusting schedules to help passengers return home.

According to Qatar Airways Regional Manager Australasia Cassandra Kerr (**inset**), the airline has helped carry over 250,000 Australians home including 92,000 to and from Sydney, never ceasing services to Australia, and the trade has been an essential part of these efforts.

"We are very thankful to know that [the trade], and their clients, knew that they could rely on us during the pandemic, to help get them where they needed to be," Kerr said.

Even before the pandemic hit, the trade was important to Qatar

Qatar Airways celebrates 5 years in Sydney



Airways, according to Kerr.

"The trade have been so critical to our success here in Sydney, and we certainly wouldn't be here without their support."

"Our relationship with the trade is very much interdependent; we rely on them to sell us, and they rely on us to consistently deliver our award-winning service to their customers," said Kerr.

Qatar Airways believes that travel will return steadily, limited by entry restrictions, rather than consumer confidence, and it expects the trade to be a key part of the industry's recovery.

To celebrate Qatar Airways' five year anniversary, from Sydney, the carrier will be running special anniversary flight offers, with a generous flexibility policy offering unlimited date or destination changes and fee-free refunds - **CLICK HERE** for details.

Travel with confidence

QATAR Airways has been one of the few airlines that has remained in the sky during the pandemic, bringing 250,000 Aussies home and flying more than 3.1 million international passengers.

During the pandemic, travellers expect flexible

booking options and Qatar Airways has responded with a range of policies.

For bookings made before 30 Apr for travel before 31 Dec, travellers can access unlimited date and destination changes at no cost, as well as refund unused tickets for no fee.



5 Year Anniversary



Celebrating five years of service from Sydney

In celebration of our fifth anniversary of flying from Sydney, your clients can take advantage of our special flight offers starting from \$1,329* return, with guaranteed flexibility**.

Click here to learn more.



GOING PLACES TOGETHER

*Terms and conditions apply.
** Visit qatarairways.com/flexibility

Pub quiz

1. What landmark bills itself as "the entertainment capital of LA"?
2. From which country does the beer Heineken come?
3. Which country's capital city is only 1km away from the border with Argentina?
4. Approximately how many stations does New York City Subway have?
 - a) Almost 400
 - b) Almost 500
 - c) Almost 600
5. New Century Global Centre in Chengdu, China, is the world's largest what?
6. In which city could you find the tallest freestanding observation tower in the United States?
7. Which city is set on the Shawmut Peninsula?
8. Which destination is known as Africa's "Sin City"?
 - a) Johannesburg, South Africa
 - b) Tripoli, Libya
 - c) Marrakesh, Morocco
9. Which is the largest hotel in the United States by rooms?
10. The design of Chongqing Art Museum is said to be inspired by which Chinese invention?

Sudoku

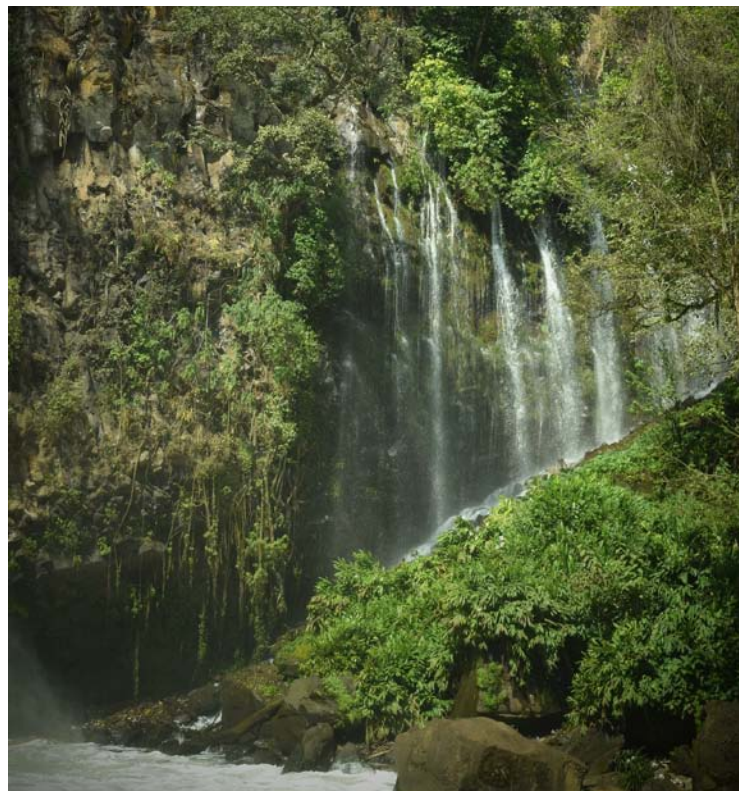
FIENDISH

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

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

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

Seen it at the movies



THE natural beauty and thick jungles of Mexico are on full display in this eighties classic.

Most of the film was shot in the jungles of Mismaloya, a perfect setting for a bunch of gnarly looking commandos to fend off a malevolent being from another world.

Perhaps the most famous action star of them all takes the lead in this flick, supported by a rare film performance from the former Governor of Minnesota, Jesse "The Body" Ventura, who quotes the best line of the feature, "I ain't got time to bleed".

Can you name the movie?

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 Jul 2014:

A DUTCH leisure tourism website has placed a job ad looking for somebody to test more than 50 roller coasters at eight theme parks in England.

Already with the highest theme park density in all of Europe, the role aims to provide info on foreign theme parks for the adrenaline-mad Dutch.

The ad tells applicants not to be afraid of "stomach churning inversions or heart-pounding thrills" - all in a day's work really.

Anybody aged 17 years or over can apply for the role before the deadline passes on 17 Jul.

Duties of the role include writing blogs about experiences, visiting and riding roller coasters at the eight biggest theme parks in England and encouraging readers to try it for themselves.

ANSWERS 02 MAR

Celebrity faces: Eyes - Jason Momoa, Nose - Stu Udy, Expedia, Mouth - Julia Roberts

Unscramble: agony, along, ANTHOLOGY, galoot, gaol, ghat, gloat, gnat, goal, goat, goon, hang, lagoon, lang, logo, long, ology, tang, tangly, tango, tangy, thong, toga, tong, yang, yoga

We want Thai Jul

THAILAND'S tourism industry is seeking the reopening of the country by Jul, citing the roll out of vaccines as a "game-changer" that would eliminate the need for quarantine requirements.

As a result the sector has unveiled the #OpenThailandSafely campaign yesterday, a push for inbound travel which has garnered the support of 15 major tourism companies, and has laid out its arguments in a petition to govt that can be viewed **HERE**.

Virgin licks its lips

VIRGIN Australia revealed its enhanced lounge menu yesterday, after the opening of its "lounge of the future" at Adelaide Airport last week (**TD** 24 Feb).

Featuring a selection of sandwiches, salads, wraps and healthy snacks prepared on site, the menu will eventually be rolled out at all Virgin lounges.

In an Australian first, Virgin is also trialing a food ordering system to initially be available in Adelaide and Melbourne.

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 near the iconic Chao Phraya River, **Oakwood Hotel & Residence Bangkok** has been unveiled ahead of its official 19 May opening. The latest location in the Thai capital will be the seventh Oakwood flag in the country, and the fourth property in Bangkok. The hotel will add 142 studios and one-bedroom apartments to the company's offering, and will be located only a short distance from popular commercial precinct, ASIATIQUE The Riverfront.



A new private standalone gatehouse cottage has been unveiled at **Coworth Park**, located in Ascot, Berkshire. The Dorchester Collection's North Lodge has a private driveway, three spacious bedrooms, a lobby, a dining room and a kitchen, where guests can cook for themselves or have a dedicated chef to cater for them, as well as a private garden with an outdoor dining area, making Coworth Park perfect for a summer staycation.



The Clan Hotel, Singapore, is the brand's first location in the Lion City, and is now open for bookings, having opened on Mon. Offering a "modern luxury hotel with a nostalgic story to tell", The Clan Hotel, Singapore, is located at the crossroads of Far East Square and Tanjong Pagar. It is also within distance of Gardens by the Bay and Marina Bay, with guests able to take advantage of an opening promotion for stays until the end of May.

Be inspired and inspire your clients by following *Travel & Cruise Weekly* on Twitter @tcweeklyAU

Travel & Cruise Weekly

Rex grabs slice of market



THE launch of Regional Express' (Rex) much-touted expansion on the east coast of Australia got underway this week (**TD** 01 Mar), with the carrier's 737 aircraft taking off from Melbourne for the first time bound for Sydney.

To mark the occasion, Rex Deputy Chair John Sharp showed the head of Melbourne Airport



Lyell Strambi (**pictured**), that competing with Qantas and Virgin Australia on the busy routes would be a piece of cake.

Earlier this week, Sharp said his airline would not be intimidated by the more established players like Qantas, who he argues have often acted in the interests of themselves and not travellers.

"[Qantas] is already at 70% of the domestic market but Alan Joyce wants more, so we'll give him a good run for his money," Sharp said.

"Rex has been around a long time and has a long track record, we're not amateurs, we're not beginners, we're not the new boys on the block - all we're doing is scaling up to a slightly more expanded business," he added.

Snap up cruises now

AUSSIES who are thinking about taking a cruise should do so sooner rather than later as rising demand shifts toward outstripping capacity in the local market, Viking Cruises MD ANZ, Michelle Black has warned.

"Australian and New Zealand travellers need to be aware that capacity is already tight for popular itineraries...and the demand for cruising is global and the UK and US markets, where cruising sentiment is generally more positive, are starting to lock in future cruise plans," Black said.



5 Year Anniversary 



Celebrating five years of service from Sydney

As we continue our commitment to Australia and your clients, we thank you for your valuable support throughout our five years of flying from Sydney.

We are proud to have flown more than 1.6 million passengers between Doha and Sydney since our launch, including over 92,000 passengers during the COVID-19 pandemic.



GOING PLACES TOGETHER