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at a cocktail party hosted by Travel Daily
on Tuesday 30th November 2021 from 6pm at Doltone House,
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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news, a front cover for *Travel Daily's* Still Standing event, a special feature from *Beyond Travel* plus a full page from *Cruise Lines International Australia*.

Member benefits

THE chance to become a CLIA member for 2022 is now open, with a host of benefits on offer, including bonus commissions and \$1,500 in combined indicative value on cruise bookings.

See **page seven** for details.

APT has you covered

APT Travel Group is offering complimentary travel insurance when Emirates flights are booked in conjunction with an APT or Travelmarvel cruise in Europe.

Insurance cover will offer travellers up to US\$500,000 for medical expenses and emergency evacuation expenses incurred on trips, and up to US\$7,500 if plans are disrupted due to COVID.

Bookings made by 31 Dec also include the option of delaying trips 65 days prior to departure.

Earn \$\$\$ with PCR tests

BLUE Powder Travel is offering travel agents the opportunity to earn commissions on travellers' PCR COVID tests via a newly created offshoot pathology arm.

The new Covid Test service allows advisors to sign up through its online portal, which in turn provides users with a booking code which can be sent through to clients.

Once registered, agents are directed to select a drive-through clinic, priced at \$115 per person, or the option of home delivery with a fully certified pathology collector kit, ranging from between \$145 and \$198 per person.

Commissions are actionable within two weeks of processing the booking payment, and the results of the PCR tests are provided directly to the clients via email within 24 hours of tests being taken.

As opposed to generic PCR testing services, Covid Test has been designed specifically with the Australian traveller in mind.

"Our company Covid Test specialises in testing for travel purposes only, meaning we are

focused on ensuring customers and travel agents get the right test at the right time with confidence and reassurance to travel internationally," Blue Powder Travel founder Michael Cohen explained.

PCR tests offered through the new site are currently available in Sydney, Newcastle, Melbourne and regional Victoria only, with Blue Powder Travel revealing intentions to expand to Brisbane before the end of the year and other Aussie cities as flights increase moving forward.

Blue Powder Travel navigated its way to the new service after flipping its model a few times, firstly by switching its focus to booking global snow holidays, before becoming a COVID courier and assisting the NSW Government in delivering over 20,000 COVID-19 tests to homes all over the state.

Access Covidtest.com.au by **CLICKING HERE**.

Black Sheep's Big 5

BLACK Sheep Tourism will represent the debut of luxury private tour company Big Five Tours & Expeditions in Australia and New Zealand.

The company offers travellers customised adventures in 44 destinations across Africa, Central America, South America and Asia, with a focus on conservation.

"Big Five's emphasis on local preservation and sustainability will appeal greatly to [local travellers]," Black Sheep Tourism founder Trish Shepherd said.

For more details on Big Five Tours' adventures, **CLICK HERE**.

Croatian appeal

CROATIA is one of Europe's hottest cruise destinations, and Beyond Travel's Cruise Croatia brand is offering agents added insight into the best ways to explore the country by sea.

Its small ship cruises offer a more authentic destination-focused experience, calling at ports larger ships can't access.

Savings of \$1,100 per cabin are also on offer for bookings made by 15 Dec - see **page eight**.



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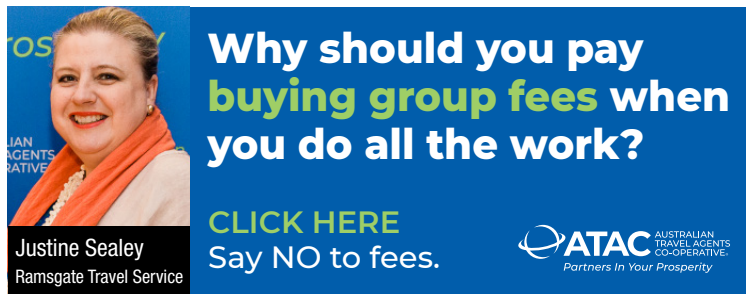
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A&K urban getaway

ABERCROMBIE & Kent has released two city getaway packages in conjunction with Park Hyatt Melbourne.

A \$2,495 family getaway (two adults and two children) includes two nights in interconnecting rooms with inclusions such as kids' activity packs, a baking demonstration and a picnic in the park, while there's also a couple's indulgence for \$995pp - for more info or to book call 1300 551 541.

Etihad green push

ETIHAD has ramped up its strategic sustainability program, signing a series of partnership and collaboration agreements with aviation sector manufacturers, suppliers and stakeholders at the 2021 Dubai Airshow this week.

Thus far EY has focused on its GENX powered Boeing 787s under the Greenliner program, but this will now be complemented by a similar scheme on maximising environmental improvements for the Rolls Royce-powered XWB Airbus A350 fleet.

The first of EY's A350s was launched at the airshow overnight carries a unique "UAE50" livery in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the federation of the United Arab Emirates, as well as the airline's commitment to the 2050 target of net-zero carbon emissions.

VA Fiji renewal

VIRGIN Australia has lodged an application with the International Air Services Commission seeking to renew a determination which allocates 907 weekly seats of capacity on the Fiji route.

A five-year renewal is requested effective from the expiry of the current determination in Nov 2022, with VA also advising the Commission that it plans to resume Sydney-Nadi flights on 16 Dec, followed the next day by Melbourne-Nadi - the first time it has flown to Fiji since Mar 2020.

The carrier also said it would "continue to regularly review the opportunity to recommence short and long-haul international services and respond to the latest advice".

SIA increases non-NDC fee

EXCLUSIVE

SINGAPORE Airlines this morning advised travel agents of a further increase to its new Distribution Fee for bookings made through traditional GDS platforms (**TD** 02 Jul 2020).

The US\$12 impost for tickets issued through the EDIFACT booking channel will increase a further 25% to US\$15 effective from 05 Jan 2022.

The carrier noted that tickets issued through SIA's NDC channels will not incur the distribution fee, including NDC access via its AGENT 360 platform or any of its GDS and technology aggregation partners.

The fee has been already implemented in markets across South East Asia, Europe and the South West Pacific including Australia "and will soon be expanded to all our offices worldwide," the carrier said.

"As NDC becomes more accessible to our partners across the network, we have conducted

a review of our existing policy and will be adjusting our current distribution fee as a result," an agent update said.

The increased fee must be filed and ticketed under the "YR" code and will be processed automatically in GDS pricing platforms, forming part of the taxes/surcharges on issued e-tickets and included in BSP reporting and settlement.

Singapore Airlines continued to urge agents to adopt NDC channels, saying that in addition to exclusive NDC fares, "NDC enabled trade partners can look forward to more content differentiation across a wider range of fare classes and RBDs".

"These expanded content differentiations will be progressively rolled out across our global points of sale over the next few months," SIA promised.

A SQ spokesperson told **TD** the carrier would continue to work with trade partners to support them in undertaking the transition to NDC, "including supporting technology partners including GDS and aggregators to implement all NDC functions."

QF status match

QANTAS has reopened the ability for top tier frequent flyers with other carriers to have become Gold members of the Qantas Frequent Flyer program.

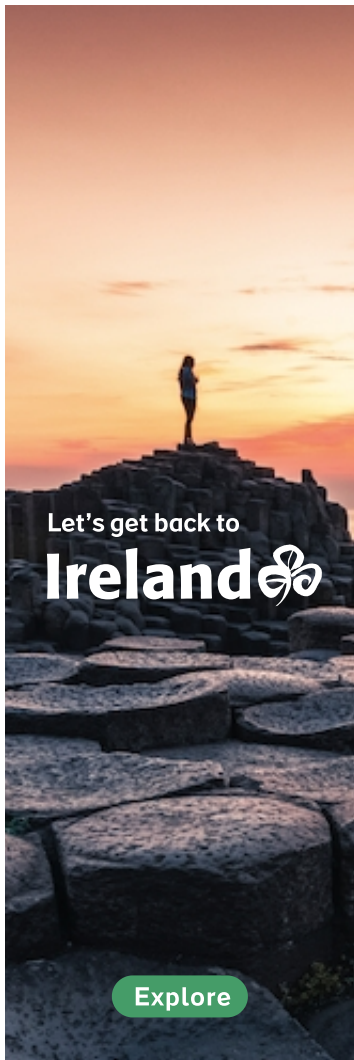
Individuals who hold gold or higher loyalty status with a qualifying program can fast track QF Gold status by earning 100 status credits between 01 Dec 2021 and 28 Feb 2022.

They must register their interest by 30 Nov and will also get 90 days of complimentary Qantas Club access - for more details see qantas.com/statusfasttrack.

TCH webinar

THE Travel Community Hub will tomorrow host a webinar discussing how travel businesses can shape their own recovery.

Featuring Jorge Fernandez and Trish Shepherd, topics up for discussion will include "financials, fees and frenemies," with the event open to members of the Travel Community Hub - sign up for a free trial at travelcommunityhub.com.



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States vary on travel lure

CLOSE to 30% of Australians are planning to take an international trip in the next 12 months, according to a new survey conducted by the University of Sydney Business School.

The research involving 1,000 Aussies also showed that 28% of planned overseas trips would be made to see family and friends, while 30% of prospective travellers said they simply wanted to “treat themselves”.

Interestingly, there were differences noted in overseas travel intention on a state-by-state basis along the east coast, with Qld by far the least willing to take at least one international trip in the next year (17%), while NSW was the most keen to get moving again, with 26% indicating plans to take a holiday abroad.

Victorians were found to be in between, recording 23% interest in travelling overseas, while residents of the state were also

the least interested in jaunting overseas for purely leisure purposes.

On the domestic travel front, Qld leads the way when it comes to visiting friends and family interstate, and was also fractionally ahead of the national average on domestic business travel intentions as well.

The study also showed that nearly half of all Australians are planning at least one domestic trip to visit family and friends in the next year, and 54% are planning at least one domestic trip to treat themselves.

“This evidence is an encouraging sign of a slow but positive recovery in tourism travel out of lockdown in the states most affected, although there are worrying signs for the recovery of domestic business travel,” Director of the Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies Professor David Hensher said.

Wyndham recruits

WYNDHAM Destinations Asia Pacific is currently recruiting for 160 roles across Australia as it prepares for a surge in travel, with positions such as bartenders, chefs, resort staff, customer service, maintenance, sales & marketing specialists sought.

The company is holding a nationwide recruitment day tomorrow between 11am and 2pm local time - more info [HERE](#).

Scooting to the UK

SINGAPORE Airlines’ low-cost carrier Scoot has announced it will fly for the first time to London before the end of the year, marking its third European port.

The new route connects Singapore (SIN) and London Gatwick (LGW) via Bangkok Suvarnabhumi (BKK), and will debut on 16 Dec using Boeing 787-8 aircraft, offering six return flights over the busy Christmas holiday period.



Window Seat

ANY time a human blasts off into space presents an opportunity to advance the scientific conversation.

NASA conducted many important tests in the early days of space travel on ants and plants in zero gravity, and now it’s the latest generation’s turn to contribute by presenting an experiment about how Mexican food can be consumed while in earth’s orbit.

Using chillies grown in space, the astronauts have reported the produce tasted great on their floating tacos, however it remains to be seen what effect hot chillies will have on the digestive systems of these intrepid space travellers in zero gravity - perhaps some data is best left hidden from humanity.

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Overseas carriers lead Sep

SINGAPORE Airlines accounted for the largest share of international passengers carried market in Sep 2021, recording 21.8% of the total volume for the month, according to the latest report from the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics (BITRE).

Qatar Airways came in second with 19%, followed by Emirates next with 14.6%, then China Southern Airlines with 5.9%, and then United Airlines at 5.3%.

Australian designated airlines (Qantas Airways, Jetstar and Virgin Australia) did not carry any international passengers on scheduled services in either Sep 2021 or Sep 2020, a stark contrast to their combined overall share of 32.9% in Sep 2019.

The total available seats on international scheduled operations to/from Australia in Sep amounted to just over 500,000 - up 54.1% on the same

month last year.

The overall seat utilisation of just 8.4% during the month compared to 19% in Sep 2020, and 83% in Sep 2019.

Sydney-Singapore was the top city pair during the month, followed by Brisbane-Singapore, Sydney-Dubai, Sydney-Los Angeles & Melbourne-Singapore.

Of Australia's major international airports, Sydney held the biggest market share in Sep with 43.9% of total passenger numbers, while Melbourne handled 24%, Brisbane looked after 18% and Perth had 9.6%.

Hilton WA debut

AUSTRALIA'S first Hilton Garden Inn has opened today in Albany, Western Australia.

The five-storey 108-room property overlooks the Albany Waterfront Marina, and is Hilton's fourth WA property.



FULL-SERVICE travel company Smartflyer Australia has revealed it is experiencing strong interest from independent contractors seeking to join the business.

Advisors have joined the Goldman Group-backed company from within the industry, with several new starters also joining from outside the sector.

"We love the fact that even in these times, we are attracting new entrants into the industry, those with a passion for travel who see the light and opportunity to build their own travel business coming out of the recent pandemic," Smartflyer Australia Director Brent Wallace said.

The company added that it

was also enjoying "significant" sales growth over the past four months, reporting a 75% increase in activity since Sep 2021 and booking volumes reaching 65% of 2019 levels.

"We attribute this increase to the entrepreneurial nature of our independent contractors and their fight for business", Director Anthony Goldman said.

"We always encourage our Smarties to think outside the box, and give them the tools they need to run their own businesses – in their own style and time."

Pictured: Smartflyer Australia Directors, Brent Wallace, Anthony Goldman, David Goldman and Stuart Reay.

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Fijian resort back 01 Dec



THE Shangri-La Yanuca Island, Fiji has announced it will be opening its doors again from 01 Dec, as Australians start to return to the popular island destination.

The 443-key property has introduced a range of packages to suit both families and couples, including the Family Fun option which offers daily breakfast for two adults and two children, return airport transfers, four hours of babysitting, and one buffet dinner for two adults and two children.

The package also includes a Fijian Village tour for the whole family and a 30-minute beach massage for two adults.

For couples seeking a romantic getaway, the resort offers the Reef Wing - Adults Only package, featuring a bottle of wine on arrival, access to a private infinity pool, free sunset cocktails and canapes daily from 5pm and a complimentary 30-minute massage when 60-minute sessions are purchased.

"There has been a hugely

positive demand from the Australian market for the upcoming summer holiday season," Shangri-La Yanuca Island Fiji GM Francis Lee said, adding stays would be perfect for travellers wanting a pre-festive break or a refresh after the holiday season.

Pictured: The resort's Takali Asian Kitchen balcony table.

Hurry for savings

HURTIGRUTEN Expedition's Freedom Sale is about to end on 21 Nov, with travellers able to save up to 15% off a range of the cruise line's sailings.

Highlights include 15% off per cabin on select Iceland 2022 voyages, select Alaska/Canada 2022 cruises, and up to 15% off the price of cabins for select Svalbard 2022 sailings.

Hurtigruten also has its Book with Confidence policy in place for all new bookings.

CLICK HERE for further information on the deals.

AFTA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



LAST week we saw the return of one of Qantas' A380s, creating another hype moment

for your customers to continue to shop and increasingly buy travel for mid to late 2022.

I have spent more time speaking to travel agents about the need for support from the Government to help us get through to the middle of next year.

Last week Laura Ruffles and Tom Manwaring met with Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg and Tourism Minister Dan Tehan to push the case for additional support for our Sector.

We are still in with a chance for a last round of support and we will need each individual travel business to help us push it over the line.

In the coming weeks I will be sharing the next approach in our grass roots advocacy campaign.

I know this is the number one program that the majority of members are focused on. I have

also heard that the fatigue from the first two rounds is real.

I know that the Government has also learnt many lessons from the first two rounds and if we are successful the roll out will be significantly improved.

On the AFTA reopening webinar series last week, we heard from IATA on the travel pass and the changes to the local financial criteria which was passed unanimously by the local governing committee consisting of both agencies and airlines.

This temporary measure will mean IATA-accredited agencies will be able to operate without the need for additional bonds.

The formal vote to approve this will take place on 23 Nov.

This week in our reopening webinar series, we will be joined by the Australian Border Force.

In the following week, Cover-More will present to the industry on the changes to travel insurance which has been a popular member request.

Importantly, this series is open to all of the industry and is free to members in recognition of your continued support of AFTA.

Mango not fruitful

SOUTH African Airways' (SAA) part-owned budget carrier Mango Airlines will not resume flights again before Christmas, with SAA labelling a recent rescue plan recommendation as "unfeasible".

In a meeting with creditors for the troubled carrier, SAA said there was no reasonable prospect of Mango succeeding should it restart prior to obtaining a new investor, reaffirming its position that the process should be finalised as soon as possible.

SAA also cited ongoing COVID as a variable for stalling any restart for Mango, which was grounded due to non-payments to Airports Company of South Africa.

A new Dawn arrives

SILVERSEA Cruises has taken delivery of newest ship *Silver Dawn* at the Fincantieri shipyard in Ancona in Italy, the third ship in its Muse-class series of vessels after *Silver Muse* & *Silver Moon*.

The latest ship will be able to accommodate 596 guests across 298 ocean-view suites, 96% of which will boast private verandas.

When she joins the rest of the fleet in Mar, *Dawn* will sail 14-night voyages between Fort Lauderdale and Lisbon.

The Royal Caribbean-owned Silversea brand said its 10th ship represented "a huge milestone" on its mission to take guests deep into the world in luxury.

In it for the **LONG** haul

Don't miss the November issue of *travelBulletin*, with the **EXCLUSIVE** first interview with AFTA's new CEO.



travelBulletin

Kids get green light

FIJI Airways will start handing out in-flight children's activity packs and books designed to educate kids about the country's fragile marine environment.

In line with Fiji's commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, from 01 Dec the national carrier will provide travellers aged 2-12 with Our Ocean, Our Life packs, featuring five fun animal characters whose quest is to save Fiji's 330 islands from climate change.

Running for the hills



THE Blue Mountains Adventure Company (BMAC) has recently expanded its range of fun family activities, which currently includes abseiling, canyoning and rock-climbing.

The most popular option Aussie families are taking up is the introductory-level abseiling and canyon combination day for adventurous beginners, which incorporates lunch, expert guides, safety equipment and all national park fees, from \$285 per person.

Also on offer is the introductory abseiling half-day package, available in the morning or afternoon, and is suitable for beginners from six years of age.

For those wanting something a little less thrilling, the operator also provides walks for all types of fitness levels and ages, such as the two-hour Experience the Blue Mountains Walk adventure which includes all safety equipment, national park fees, transport to the trail and expert guides.

Pictured: A tour group enjoying the mountain views.

Thai's new player

A **NEW** hotel management company has launched in Thailand, with designs on becoming a major lifestyle brand in Thai islands like Phuket.

Utopia Hospitality Group is a new subsidiary of established real estate developer Utopia Corporation, and has revealed plans to operate several new hotels via rebranding and renovations from 2022, specialising in the midscale and upscale lifestyle segments, as well as in ultra-luxury accommodation.

MONEY

WELCOME to Money, *TD's* Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

AU\$1 = US\$0.734

THE US dollar surged much higher this week after inflation in the United States reached 6.2% in the twelve months to Oct - reported as the quickest pace since 1990.

The result has seen the Aussie tumble against the Greenback, losing 0.9% in the exchange.

Meanwhile the Aussie managed to regain small ground on the Euro, but dropped a tad on China's Yuan.

Wholesale rates this morning.

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| US | \$0.734 |
| UK | £0.547 |
| NZ | \$1.041 |
| Euro | €0.646 |
| Japan | ¥83.84 |
| Thailand | ฿24.04 |
| China | ¥4.689 |
| South Africa | 11.19 |
| Canada | \$0.919 |
| Crude oil | US\$82.17 |

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Croatia the Cruise Croatia Way

Croatia is one of Europe's hottest destinations and it is little wonder why; from its spectacular Adriatic Coastline and beautiful Dalmatian islands, to the UNESCO listed Plitvice lakes and historic fortified hill top villages of Istria, Croatia and surrounds – the region offers your clients a wealth of unique and beautiful sights to explore.

An ideal way to experience Croatia is surely aboard a small ship cruise.

Averaging only 38 passengers these family owned vessels are like a floating boutique hotel, the ideal size to explore the region in comfort, travelling into the very heart of the historic ports inaccessible to large cruise ships.

Don't think of a small ship Croatian cruise as you might a large ocean cruise, although they attract avid

ocean cruises, it is at its heart a very different product; small ships offer a far more authentic destination focused experience, with daily stops at charming historic ports and moorings in the centre of town so guests can simply step off and explore the best the region has to offer.

The Croatian coastline is spectacular, lined with rugged mountains leading down to crystal clear blue waters and the cruises hug the coast, weaving between the myriad of peninsulas and islands sailing calm waters, affording beautiful views throughout the journey with little chance of sea sickness.

With over 28 years experience Cruise Croatia is a Australian based family owned Croatia specialist, offering the largest range of small

ship cruises and tours from Split, Dubrovnik and beyond.

Invite your clients to join us in 2022 on an authentic exploration of this beautiful destination the Cruise Croatia way.

DON'T MISS THE BOAT

Book early for 2022! Instant availability on deluxe cabins with savings up to \$1,100 per cabin (book by 15 Dec 21). Contact Cruise Croatia today for details and request custom flyers branded for your agency.