

## Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news plus a full page from vyatra.

## New virtual tours

**LIVE-STREAMED** guided virtual journeys company vyatra has introduced three immersive journeys around India.

Currently on offer is the Mystical Ganga, In Buddha's Footsteps, and Enchanting Krishna, which are all live on Zoom, featuring professional tour guides.

With limited prospects of travel in the short-term due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and then the longer-term challenges of overcrowding in places with sensitive ecology and a high carbon footprint, vyatra has conceptualised a series of live, interactive virtual journeys of places that are sacred, spectacular and/or difficult to get to.

Featuring audience Q&As with the guides and live Hindustani classical music.

The company is now seeking commercial relationships with travel and tour operators - see **page eight** for more details.

## P&O around Oz

**P&O Cruises Australia** has launched a 28-night Australia Explorer itinerary departing in Jun 2024, as part of its 2023/24 program.

The cruise is a first-of-its-kind domestic sailing for P&O Australia, giving guests the chance to experience 11 iconic Aussie ports aboard *Pacific Explorer*.

The voyage will depart from either Sydney or Brisbane.

## ACCC ticks student travel

**THE** Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has granted final approval to allow NSW and ACT universities to collaborate on travel arrangements for the return of international students for a 15-month period.

The first phase of the pilot plan will be to bring back 500 students by the end of the year, with the latest ruling by the country's consumer watchdog to provide universities with an exemption from competition law so they can collaborate and follow through with the NSW Government's ambition of welcoming back international students.

In light of ongoing delays in overseas students being able to return to Australia due to continued international travel restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACCC has also granted the universities' request to extend

the authorisation until 31 Dec 2022 rather than Jun 2022, as was initially proposed.

The decision coincides with a new proposal put forward by the Victorian Government to allow int'l students to return to the state by the end of the year under its Student Arrivals Plan.

Initial stages of the proposal would see 120 places made available each week for Victorian university students, prioritising those who need to undertake practical work to continue or complete their degrees, and would be in addition to Victoria's international arrivals cap, meaning it would not displace any returning Australians.

In 2019, the ABS estimated that int'l students spent \$22.8 billion on local goods and services.

## The Ghan adds more

**DUE** to popular demand, Journey Beyond has announced two new departure dates for its Taste of The Ghan trips in Nov - bringing the rail journey's initial four departures to six.

Available dates still left for Aussies to book now include 22 Oct, 05 Nov, 12 Nov, 19 Nov, and 26 Nov.

The Taste of The Ghan takes guests on a single-day regional journey towards the Clare Valley, where travellers can enjoy off-train experiences with wine tastings and a four-course gourmet lunch at local Clare Valley wineries.

Guests are also served a two-course gourmet breakfast on board - for further details about the trip, see **HERE**.

## Sydney needs 80%

**THE** NSW Government has confirmed that fully vaccinated Sydneysiders will need to wait until the state hits 80% double jabbed before travel to regional areas will be permitted.

Newly installed Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW Paul Toole reiterated that it would still be "a few more weeks" before residents from Greater Sydney can travel out to the regions for holidays or recreation.

"We know people are busting to get out and explore the best of the bush...but this is not something we're going to rush," Toole said.

## Skywards benefits

**EMIRATES** Skywards has rolled out several exciting offerings with Skywards Exclusives, including more ways to redeem Skywards Miles at globally-renowned sporting events.

Members of the loyalty program have the chance to join the excitement at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, the Formula One Paddock Club, or at a soccer game hosted by Arsenal, Lyon, Milan or Real Madrid - click **HERE**.

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## Window Seat

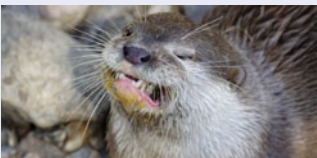
**ASK** most people who have travelled there and they will tell you that Alaska is a beautiful place - pristine, unspoilt and a must-see travel destination.

However one drawback (at least currently) might be the travelling band of violent otters who local authorities claim are guilty of attacking adults, children and dogs in Anchorage.

One alleged victim was nine-year-old Ayden Fernandez, who was descended upon by a deranged otter while filming at a duck pond with his brother, and after being chased, the boy fell and was jumped on by a fellow otter in crime, who proceeded to sink its teeth into the child's upper thigh and foot.

As shocking as it might appear to most, otter attacks are not unheard of, with a labradoodle attacked and pulled under water by a lurking otter in 2019, thankfully the unlucky canine survived.

Authorities have issued a description of the otter involved in the latest attack, the assailant looks furry, weasly and has whiskers.



## Googling greener

**GOOGLE** has rolled out new eco-friendly search filters to help users make more environmentally conscious decisions about how they travel.

The company's Chief Executive Officer Sundar Pichai announced a number of green initiatives are being worked on, which includes an update to Google Flights, which will now display information about carbon emissions directly in its list of search results.

When users search for hotels, they will now see information on each property's sustainability efforts, such as waste reduction and water conservation measures, and whether they're Green Key or EarthCheck.

## Trafalgar Europe

**TRAFALGAR** has released new Europe itineraries for 2022/23.

Trips span 126 itineraries across 50 countries – giving guests access to Trafalgar's extensive network of partnerships as the global availability of travel products becomes scarcer due to increased demand.

Top-sellers include European Whirl, where travellers will visit Rome, Florence, Paris, Amsterdam, Venice and more.

Meanwhile, Best of Italy takes in the must-see sights and local secrets of the country, from the ancient treasures of Rome to Renaissance-era Florence.

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## No support for NZ agents

**MEMBER** of the New Zealand Parliament for Remutaka Chris Hipkins has made it clear there will be no more direct support for NZ's travel advisors, and no plans to involve them in managed isolation & quarantine.

The Travel Agents Association of New Zealand (TAANZ) said the news, circulated in a letter from Hipkins to a colleague, will be a bitter pill for members to swallow, as advisors will now be forced to rely solely on generalised wage subsidy and resurgent payments.

Hipkins also said the dialogue regarding New Zealand's Consumer Travel Reimbursement Scheme is closed.

"We thought we should be up-front and share this news so that each member can understand the implications to their own business," TAANZ said.

It added MIQ would be greatly enhanced by having advisors as a conduit for the booking process to align hotels with available airline seats.

"MIQ in its current form is

not fit for purpose," TAANZ said, adding it would be greatly amplified by involving the sector, "given that is a core element of what travel agents do."

"The government to date has ignored this logic and continues with a system that does not fully utilise the available hotel space in MIQ and causes heartache for those trying to secure a spot.

"This is another situation where the government and the ministries will not accept or even acknowledge the expertise of private enterprise."

It is a brutal blow for New Zealand's travel industry, which is still reeling from a decision by the Government of NZ to more than double the country's Border Processing Levy (**TD 30 Sep**).

Effective 01 Dec, the current NZD\$20.11 fee per airline pax return trip will become NZD\$43.73, and levies for cruise pax are being increased to NZD\$36.72 - a decision blasted by TAANZ as "kicking an industry while it's down".

**WALL STREET TRAVEL**  
TRAVEL CONSULTANTS WANTED!



**Wall Street Travel**, an IATA agency established in 1988, is looking to add some experienced team members to rebuild as business returns, currently working from offices in Sydney's inner west, with plans to expand and eventually relocate to the CBD, our traditional home.

WST has traded throughout the pandemic at a subdued level; managing repatriations, family reunions and a bit of business travel. Our clients have traditionally been SME's, CEO's, high net worths that travel in the premium cabins, with primarily long haul complex itineraries. We do interesting work that requires engagement and the ability to actually sell to our clients.

Of recent years we have managed quite a few intergenerational family holidays to exotic destinations, and our CPD Conferencing subsidiary runs an annual ski conference in North America for professionals, business owners and their families.

Candidates must know how to sell, multi-task, work as part of a team and maybe have some following, you will need to be flexible and looking to thrive going forward.

**Wall Street Travel is a business that believes its best days are still ahead.** To make a confidential enquiry contact MD Ben Caplan via email to [ben\\_caplan@wallstreettravel.com.au](mailto:ben_caplan@wallstreettravel.com.au).

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## Time to learn & win

**SAMOA** Tourism will be hosting a special webinar for agents at 11am AEDT on 13 Oct to update the trade about the latest developments & product updates from the Pacific Island nation.

Attendees will also go into the draw to win one of two \$200 shopping vouchers - register [HERE](#) to learn more.

## Confident in return

**BETWEEN** 79-90% of travel agents recently surveyed by the Globus family of brands (GFOB) said they were “extremely likely” to book with the operator once travel finally resumes.

“It’s so encouraging to receive this feedback from our travel agent partners and to see this continued support after a hard 18 months in the industry,” GFOB MD Australasia Gai Tyrrell said.

The operator also enjoyed a 37% spike in web traffic when compared to the previous month.

## A third are in big trouble

**ONE** in three tourism businesses are “facing extinction” within the next three months, according to new figures released by the Tourism & Transport Forum (TTF).

The organisation commissioned a survey of 500 businesses via Newgate Research which painted a bleak picture of the road ahead for the tourism sector despite the prospect of tourism commencing in early 2022, with four in ten tourism exposed businesses feeling things will get worse over the next three months.

Perhaps of most concern was the finding that 20% of tourism companies are planning to hibernate over the next three months to survive, while 10% said they are planning to sell up shop altogether.

The data also found that a third believe the outlook for their business will be very grim for at least the next 12 months, forcing

the majority of operations (71%) to explore additional cost-cutting initiatives to try and open up new revenue streams to stay afloat.

Close to 70% of respondents noted they are now examining the prospect of cutting staff hours, while 62% said they are looking at scaling down over the next three months.

“Tourism businesses have made it clear that as other sectors recover, they still foresee a challenging period ahead not only in the short term but for the next year or more,” TTF CEO Margy Osmond said.

“It’s not like we are expecting an ‘open sesame’ moment where everything returns to normal... as long as Australians feel they are at the mercy of policy-makers playing border roulette.”

Osmond added that a combo of increased air routes and targeted support packages are needed for the tourism sector to survive.

## VA back to Coffs

**VIRGIN** Australia will reintroduce flights between Sydney/Melbourne and Coffs Harbour from 01 Nov after being suspended for seven months.

The services are now on sale & to mark the return, VA is offering one-way Economy fares from \$45 until 11.59pm AEDT today.

Services will account for 29,000 pax per month between the three destinations.

## TUI’s equity grab

**TUI** is planning to raise over €1 billion after a recent boost in holiday bookings.

In a statement yesterday, TUI said the share sale will allow it to decrease its draw on a state-backed rescue loan to zero, with the sale to be offered at a discount price of €2.15 each.

During the pandemic, TUI has taken on loans of more than €4 billion, and has been bailed out multiple times by Germany.



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## Red list revamped

**AUTHORITIES** in the UK have adjusted the country's "red list" of destinations classed as high risk for COVID-19 to just seven countries, as part of ongoing easing of pandemic restrictions.

Previously inbound travellers to Britain from 54 designated destinations were required to quarantine in a hotel for 10 days, but overnight that was reduced to just comprise Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela.

The change is effective 11 Oct, and follows a simplification of the previous traffic-light system to just have "red" or "rest of the world" destinations where the Foreign Office allows unrestricted travel for Britons.

PCR tests on day two after arrival are also set to be replaced with a cheaper lateral flow test in the coming weeks, sources said.

## Vietnam reopening

**SELECTED** destinations in Vietnam will reopen to foreign tourists in Dec, with officials confirming the restart of visitation from low risk countries to Hoi An, Nha Trang and Ha Long Bay in the coming months.

An earlier plan to reopen the island of Phu Quoc to tourists this month has been delayed until Nov due to sluggish vaccination rollouts, with just 13% of Vietnam's population currently fully immunised against COVID-19.

## Venice flight boost

**EUROPEAN** low cost carriers Ryanair and Wizz Air have confirmed plans to both open bases at Venice Marco Polo Airport (VCE), with a host of new routes across the continent expected to launch as a result.

Ryanair will soon take delivery of 55 new 737 MAX-8s.

## Trendsetter *Travel & Cruise Centre*

Trendsetter Travel & Cruise Centre is seeking a talented travel advisor accustomed to meeting the travel needs of a diverse client base, predominantly luxury focused. Extensive knowledge of business and first class airfares, deluxe hotels, premium and luxury cruise is essential. You must be able to work independently and efficiently. An affinity with the golf market, though not essential, will be advantageous. Trendsetter is a Virtuoso member, with Amadeus GDS and Travelog accounting. Our office is located in Longueville/Northwood.

Please apply in confidence to Adrienne Witteman 02 9428 5900 or email [adrienne@trendsettertravel.com.au](mailto:adrienne@trendsettertravel.com.au)

## Blue skies for NCL steppers



**PARTICIPANTS** in this year's Norwegian Cruise Line Walk for Wellness (**TD** 01 Oct) have so far collectively covered a whopping 30,000km - well over a quarter of the way to the overall 100,000km monthly goal.

The participating pavement-pounders include NCL's travel industry partners from across Australia and New Zealand, with the initiative part of the cruise line's commitment to the industry and helping keep spirits up despite the challenges of the last 12 months.

This week's top stepper was Peter Manase from Manase Travel New Zealand, who clocked up an unbelievable average daily total count of 37,700 steps!

More than 1,000 people are participating in the challenge, including our very own five-strong **Travel Daily** Trekkers team who have together walked almost 300km so far.

The initiative, which is themed around the anticipated launch of *Norwegian Prima* in about 12 months time, includes regular

photo challenges, with the first one asking walkers to snap items spelling out P.R.I.M.A. during one of their ambulations.

The winner was Ellen Goodwin from Flight Centre Baulkham Hills in NSW, who took inspiration from the retail outlets she passed (**pictured** below) to win a \$50 Good Food Gift Card.



Some of the walkers have been lucky enough to be joined by their local Norwegian Cruise Line representatives, with the group **pictured** at top including Craig McLaurin, NCL BDM for Qld who enjoyed a walk from Alexandra Headland to Maroochydoore Surf Club on the Sunshine Coast with industry colleagues Ben Earl, Flight Centre Buderim; Chloe Blundell, Helloworld Forest Glen; Jacinta Blundell, Helloworld Buderim; and Isabelle Tremblay, Flight Centre Buderim.

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## CORPORATE UPDATE

# VA Accelerate revamp

### EXCLUSIVE

**VIRGIN** Australia has revised the terms of its Accelerate corporate customer program, simplifying the scheme with the previous Travel Credit tiers removed effective from 06 Oct.

Previously clients were offered volume-based rebates on the amount of VA flights booked through the platform, with the revised scheme meaning Accelerate customers no longer need to reach a minimum spend or an anniversary to receive a travel credit.

A VA spokesperson told *Travel Daily* "all in all, the net benefit of our new lower fare prices combined with the revised Accelerate program discount terms has resulted in more competitive fares than ever".

Given the last two years of negligible flying for many businesses, the previous volume-based model would not have been effective coming out of the pandemic, the carrier said.

"Since exiting administration we have simplified our business model and have substantially reduced the cost of airfares

## CWT tax compliance

**CWT** has partnered with Tracker Software Technologies to simplify tax and immigration compliance for their mutual clients.

The move will see CWT able to provide a data feed of applicable travel bookings to the Tracker platform on request, which will in turn automatically assess individual trip data and proactively alert nominated travel managers to specific tax and immigration compliance requirements before departure.

"Employers and their travellers are at risk of significant fines and sanctions if they do not have the correct immigration and tax protocols in place for any given business trip," claimed CWT President Patrick Andersen.

across the board.

"Accelerate members will continue to receive discounts on top of our already low airfares without the need to reach a minimum spend or anniversary," the spokesperson added.

VA cited a recent Butler Caroye study which found that the price gap between Qantas and Virgin Australia had doubled in favour of VA having cheaper fares.

The price gap was 67.1% in the second quarter of 2021, vs 32.8% in the first half of 2019, with VA saying "we are a much better proposition for SME/Accelerate customers than our competitor".

## CTM enhancements

**CORPORATE** Travel Management has unveiled a range of new technology features to "help businesses safeguard both their travellers and their travel budgets".

Released during last week's Business Travel Show Europe, the enhancements include new risk and health alert notifications in CTM's Lightning proprietary online booking tool, with updates provided during the trip search workflow to help passengers make informed travel decisions.

Existing duty of care tools for travel, risk and HR managers are also being expanded with a new "safety check-in" feature requiring travellers in particular designated countries or situations to periodically verify they are safe.

## AA offset move

**CORPORATE** members of the American Airlines Business Extra program can now redeem points for carbon offsets.

The move is part of a revamp of the program announced this week, which also allows members to use points to give staff Gold or Platinum AAdvantage status, or convert points into miles which can then be transferred directly to employees.

## Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly's fortnightly consumer magazine called *Keep Dreaming* is specially designed for agents to send their clients.



## Have a Captain Cook at this!



**THE** team at Captain Cook Cruises in Sydney celebrated some good news this week, after being named one of five winners in the Klook Pandemic Pivot Awards 2021.

The attractions and experiences distributor created the awards program to celebrate travel operators which have adapted to the uncertainty of the pandemic, with Klook one of the first OTAs to support Captain Cook's new Harbour Bar & Restaurant offering (*TD* 05 Feb).

Other Klook winners included Blue Mountains Explorer Bus which pivoted to offer the Megalong Valley Wine Trail Experience; Sydney Harbour Kayaks for its night-time sea kayak offering; Symbio Wildlife Park for encouraging NSW residents to pay their Dine & Discover scheme vouchers forwards to kids in need; and Moonshadow-TQC Cruises which introduced a new Cruising Eats'n'Beats evening product showcasing local musicians and produce.

## Papers reveal BCD battle

**THE** Pandora Papers, a leak of financial information from scores of international tax havens, have given a unique insight into a tussle within the family of the owners of corporate travel behemoth BCD Travel.

Dutch newspapers *Trouw* and *Het Financieele Dagblad* have delved into the documents which indicate disagreements between BCD founder John Fentener van Vlissingen and his son Robert-Jan.

Robert-Jan owns a third of the shares in the company, but control resides with his father and it appears this has led to significant dissatisfaction, with the son not able to vote on key decisions including distribution of profits to shareholders.

It also appears that Fentener van Vlissingen senior is frustrated that his son "repeatedly refuses to cooperate with requests from financial institutions to provide

his passport and address details as a co-owner of the company," the report says.

A spokesperson for BCD assuaged concerns about the rift, saying "BCD Group naturally adheres to applicable laws and regulations," with the management of the company structured in such a way that BCD's future "can never be endangered by a difference of opinion".

**MEANWHILE** BCD Travel has also expanded its links into the Spanish market, through a strengthened partnership agreement with Spain's leading travel group Avoris, which merged with Globalia earlier this year (*TD* 07 May).

Avoris also represents BCD Meetings and Events in Spain, and works closely with BCD Sports and BCD Media & Entertainment.

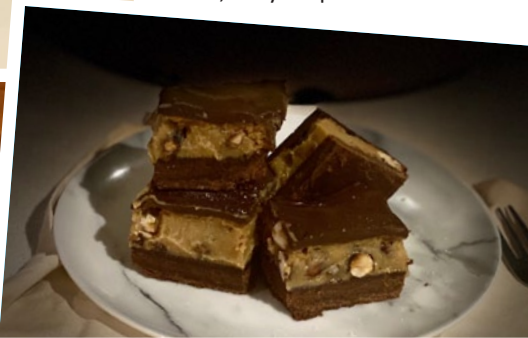
## WARNING: delicious travel treats ahead

**THROW** all those pandemic diet promises out the window - these efforts from travel industry bakers in the inaugural *Travel Daily* Bake-Off leave no excuse not to indulge. We received scores of entries from some of the most creative culinary minds in Australia, and our only deep regret is that we weren't able to taste them.

The overall winner has been chosen as Janelle Anderson from Queanbeyan City Travel, who each week wowed us with an array of delights including her family favourite lemon and blueberry friands (**left**) - always made with fresh fruit - with lemon curd injected right into the centre for a vistrous zing.

Janelle also sent a pic of some incredible late night choc chip cookies during chocolate chip week (**below right**), a carrot cake complete with carrot-shaped decorations (**below left**) and an absolutely scrumptious caramel slice (**below centre**) for the first week of the bake-off. She wins a \$50 gift card for her stellar efforts.

Thanks to everyone who entered, and next time we run the Bake-Off we hope you'll be able to share your efforts with your work colleagues in flourishing, vibrant, busy reopened offices!



**THIS** delicious raspberry and almond slice never lasts long in the home of Kylie Organ from Redcliffe Cruise & Travel.



**LEONIE** Spencer from Champagne Travel in Mandurah, WA sent this family favourite Banana Bread Crumble Cake - perfect for leftover ripe bananas!

**HELEN** Demetriou (@HELENSKOUZINA) from Luxury Escapes sent in this family favourite Feta and Spinach Quiche Pie.



**DERRICK** Braithwaite and Lisa Connor from Cruise1st Australia are probably consoling his NRL GF disappointment with another batch of these Fudgy Chewy White Choc Chip Brown Sugar Cookies.



**THERE** are just four ingredients in this Cadbury Caramilk slice from Kylie Brady from KB 4 Travel & Cruise - check out the method by **CLICKING HERE**.



**TASTE** the rainbow with these amazing Rainbow Cupcakes from Marlena Attard of Cathay Pacific - the middle is filled with sprinkles for an element of extra surprise.



**THE** bake-off competition was perfectly timed for Amy Bradley of Phil Hoffmann Travel, who whipped up this caramel slice for her team.

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## Plaza Premium LGW

**PLAZA** Premium Group has opened Plaza Premium Lounge at London Gatwick Airport, with the facility able to accommodate up to 190 guests.

The news precedes an expansion plan across Europe, with six lounges scheduled to open before the end of 2021.

## BA nears pre-COVID

**BRITISH** Airways will welcome back its A380 as part of its biggest schedule since Mar 2020.

The aircraft will rejoin BA's fleet earlier than expected, initially operating to LA, Miami & Dubai.

BA is also increasing flights to the United States by adding more services to other key cities.

## Come sail with Sarina

**PAUL** Gauguin Cruises is offering Australian travellers the chance to cruise with the line's Chairman Asia Pacific Sarina Bratton on its special Chairman Cruise departing in Jun next year.

Planned with the sensibilities of Aussies in mind, the 11-night voyage will explore Tahiti, the Society Islands & the Tuamotus, and feature several shore excursions where guests can swim and snorkel at various secluded Polynesian spots.

To celebrate Bratton's first Chairman voyage, the cruise will also host a cocktail party the night before departure, giving pax a chance to mingle over champagne and canapés before setting off - more details [HERE](#).

## Flight Centre mending hearts



**FLIGHT** Centre's charity arm the Flight Centre Foundation recently supported the Queensland Children's Hospital by packing 450 boxes for an initiative to help with child youth & mental health clinics around Brisbane.

The philanthropic division also got behind the Simple Gift of a Bag initiative for breast cancer awareness month, making

handmade drain bags for breast cancer, as well as supporting the Precious Wings initiative, packing over 57 memory boxes for families who have lost a beloved child.

**Pictured:** The Flight Centre Foundation showing off one of the many boxes they created for the Queensland Children's Hospital cause.

## Show us your best New Years Eve Photo!

*Rediscover Australia and Unique Cruises* are partnering with *Travel Daily* this month to offer readers the chance to win a ticket on the **NYE Hits on the Harbour Cruise**, as well as offering \$100 and \$50 gift vouchers for 2nd and 3rd prize by providing your best picture of your past New Years Eve celebrations.

This ticket gives you access to:

- 6 Hours Sydney Harbour Cruise on Journey Beyond Cruise Sydney's *Spirit of Migloo*
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To enter send a picture of your best New Years Eve along with, in 25 words or less, what made it so memorable.

Entries to [competitions@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:competitions@traveldaily.com.au)

## 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)

**APT** is offering savings of \$600 per couple on its 12-day Tasmania Complete tours departing 02 Nov and 21 Dec, now priced from \$6,195 per person twin share. The tour of the Apple Isle includes visits to Port Arthur, Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, Freycinet, Strahan and Smithton. Call 1300 278 278 for more details.

Lunch cruises are available for two people for the price of one with **Sydney Harbour Tall Ships** to celebrate the company's commencement of sailings this month. The two-hour cruise departs on 11 Oct from Campbell's Cove at 1.30pm and costs two adults only \$109 at the reduced rate. Call 02 8015 5571.

Save 20% off select **G Adventures** trips when booking for travel before 31 Oct 2022. The deal ends on 01 Nov and includes trips to Japan, Peru, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco and Cambodia. All bookings can be rebooked up to 14 days before departure. [CLICK HERE](#).

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

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