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Journey into WA

JOURNEY Beyond has released 2022 Indian Pacific rail holiday packages featuring several of Western Australia's most iconic experiences, including Rottneest Island, Sal Salis Ningaloo Reef and Horizontal Falls Seaplane Adventures.

All-inclusive offers lead in at \$2,755 per person - for more info see the **cover page** of today's **TD**.

Learn about AIUla!

TRAVEL consultants now have the opportunity to win a pair of limited edition Adidas sneakers while learning about one of the world's hottest new tourist destinations, AIUla in Saudi Arabia, as part of a newly released module on the **Travel Daily** Training Academy.

The new program has gone live today, promising to educate agents whose clients could be among the first to experience AIUla - sign up for free at training.traveldaily.com.au.

HLO tech double-down

HELLOWORLD has confirmed the Oct rollout of new technology platforms in its retail, corporate and wholesale operations, with the company's annual report detailing ongoing investment in IT systems despite the pandemic.

The ResWorld mid-office system is now in place in almost half of the company's Helloworld branded outlets in Australia, while the corporate version of the platform is in beta testing with deployment starting next month.

The new Mango wholesale platform, based on a custom front-end for Tourplan NX, will roll out in Oct too, with the company saying "this is a very significant shift for our wholesale business and will provide much greater functionality, ease of loading and a wider array of product for all our retail agents throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Helloworld's cruise division has now rolled out a unified version

of Odysseus, while the Air Tickets platform is undergoing ongoing enhancement to accommodate NDC functionality and reintroducing automation around cancellations and refunds.

Another significant innovation within the company is the new ReadyRooms platform, based on the former Excite Holidays software acquired by Helloworld from the collapsed firm's administrators (**TD** 14 Feb 2020).

Now called Athena, the system has been transformed by HLO's team in Greece and will be launched later this month.

Finally, the Skiddoo online travel agency operation acquired three years ago (**TD** 20 Mar 2018) will be relaunched in Oct with an updated platform.

Temporarily closed due to the "complete lack of international travel at present," Skiddoo will go live in anticipation of the reopening of Australia's borders.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news plus a front cover page from **Journey Beyond** and a full page from **Monaco Tourism**.

Monaco revamps

VISIT Monaco is inviting people to discover the principality's many exciting new developments and projects.

Monaco's initiatives include luxury hotel renovations and sustainability initiatives - see **page six** for more details.

iTravel adds Mint

ITRAVEL has announced the appointment of Mint Payments as its official payments partner.

Mint's newest product, MintEFT, will now be part of iTravel's offerings, building on the existing relationship between itravel and Mint for credit card processing, providing greater payments capabilities for itravel's network.

Ireland **VIRTUAL EXPO**

Enjoy a Riverdance performance, cooking demo by an Irish chef and music from the Shamrock Tenors. Great prizes to be won!

7 & 8 September 2021

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Insurer fined \$1.5 million

INSURANCE company Allianz and its related arm AWP Australia have been slapped with a \$1.5 million penalty by the Federal Court for “misleading and deceptive conduct” in relation to travel insurance policies sold through Expedia websites.

The deceptive actions, which duplicated around 35,000 clients, were detailed under a settlement secured by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) last year (**TD 04 Nov 2020**), and included Allianz failing to correctly disclose how premiums were calculated in product disclosure statements so that travellers were not given accurate details on the type of insurance they were purchasing.

In some cases, customers who bought travel insurance on Expedia’s websites were ineligible to make claims under the policies.

In handing down his verdict, Chief Justice James Allsop said

the \$1.5 million penalty would deter the sector and Allianz from adopting a lax attitude towards compliance in the future.

ASIC Deputy Chair Sarah Court added that it was imperative for travellers that there are consequences for unscrupulous conduct in the travel insurance space so that consumers have “peace of mind” on holidays.

“The value of an insurance policy is in the promise - that a consumer can feel confident and secure that they will be looked after if something goes wrong,” Court said.

“The community expects that the insurance industry will promote and sell products in a transparent way... ASIC remains committed to ensuring that consumers’ experience matches that expectation,” she added.

AWP was ordered to pay a fine of \$1.14 million, while Allianz will have to pay \$360,000.

Caps hit SQ flights

SINGAPORE Airlines has advised a number of its bookings have been impacted by the Australian Government’s inbound capacity reductions.

SQ has had to cancel a small number of passenger flights to Sydney, Melbourne and Perth over the next two months.

MEANWHILE, SQ has extended the completion date for passengers holding tickets under the Global Travel Waiver Policy.

Pax can now complete or refund their travel up to 30 Jun 2022.

Car hires with that?

BUDGET Australia has announced a partnership with McDonald’s for its annual Monopoly Game.

The car hire company has three prizes up for grabs, including the major prize of car rental for a year with no lock-in contracts.

Minor prizes include a four-day getaway and discounted rentals.

NT drives me crazy

THE NT Government has today unveiled a 10-year Drive Tourism Strategy to position the region as “the perfect destination” to take a road trip.

The 2021-2030 Drive Tourism Strategy identifies key product and marketing opportunities, with four key focus areas, including attracting new growth markets to increase visitor numbers, improving the current guest experience to increase length of stay, growing dispersal to improve outcomes for rural areas, and enhancing brand reputation through key markets.

Plans will also include new road infrastructure such as camping and recreational vehicle grounds.

The 10-year plan comes ahead of Round Four of the Territory Tourism Vouchers that are being released next month, with the rollout designed to incentivise Territorians to plan travel more than 400 kilometres from home.



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Vax passport is essential

MORE than 80% of travel experts believe vaccine passports will be an essential tool in enabling the sector to rebound effectively after the pandemic, new data from Finder suggests.

The survey's results were in line with similar findings delivered by Flight Centre polling last month (**TD** 23 Aug), which found four in five people were in favour of vaccine passports if it meant a quicker return to business travel.

The Finder survey also found that 84% of travel experts canvassed agreed that opening Australia's international borders to fully vaccinated tourists in 2022 without having to undergo hotel quarantine was a good idea.

Commenting on the results, Chairman of foreign exchange provider CLSA Premium, Peter Boehm, said the travel and tourism sector should go ahead under a vaccinated model that balances both health and

economic concerns.

"If tourists are fully vaccinated, and we open up the economy once we reach the planned vaccination rates, then the risk of death is materially reduced and life should, and must, go on as normal as possible," he said.

However, the same study also found that only 11% of experts predicted interstate borders would open up to travellers before the end of the year, with the majority tipping that it would happen during Q1 next year, while a third of respondents lamenting interstate travel might even be later, during Q2 2022.

MEANWHILE the Australian Aviation Ground Handling Industry Alliance has warned that Australian domestic flights could be cancelled between Nov and Feb if third-party airport staff are excluded from support packages, claiming exiting workers will create major staff shortages.



Vaccinate or perish

PROMINENT hotel owner Dr Jerry Schwartz believes vaccinations should be made mandatory for hotel staff so that guests and children are protected from the threat of COVID-19.

"The hotel industry has been devastated by COVID-19 and policies of govts, so it is essential we equip ourselves with the tools to drive a recovery," he said.

QR global promo

QATAR Airways has launched a global destination promotion, offering travellers special fares to more than 140 global destinations and double Qpoints.

The six-day sale starts today, with customers joining Qatar Airways Privilege also earning 5,000 in bonus Qmiles.

New members will also gain access to exclusive 2022 FIFA World Cup offers.

The promo is valid on all flights booked between today and Mon.



Window Seat

THE Queensland region of Logan City has plenty for tourists to see, from its Koala reserves to the Bayside Aqua Park, but now the town is taking off for an entirely new reason.

The area is claiming to be "the drone delivery capital of the world" ever since Google's tech company Wing landed in 2019.

Last year alone, Logan City saw residents order 10,000 cups of hot coffee and 1,200 piping hot roast chickens - now that's what we call fast food delivery!



Introducing The Great Travel Daily Bake Off!

In September, we're encouraging our readers to bake along with us, with different recipes each week.

Send us a picture of your baked goods, along with any extra tips or secret ingredients or variations, and the best one will win a \$50 gift voucher. Email bakeoff@traveldaily.com.au

This week's recipe:

CARAMEL SLICE



Business Publishing Group's Jenny Piper with her creation.

Lufthansa lifts experience



LUFTHANSA has improved its travel experience with a new innovative cabin (pictured), available now.

The first flight with the new Airspace cabin took off on Sat from Frankfurt to Fuerteventura, with passengers enjoying more

seating comfort, almost 40% larger luggage compartments, and a modern lighting concept.

The new cabin will also be used by Brussels Airlines, Eurowings and Swiss International Air Lines, in addition to Lufthansa, which is the newest customer of the Airbus A320 family.

The new overhead bins can hold almost two-thirds more suitcases, and the cabin's entrance area has been extensively redesigned to appear brighter and friendlier.

The new "human-centric lighting", a specially programmed and flexible lighting system, illuminates the cabin in warm red light, graduated intermediate tones, and cooler blue light.

Viking wants you

VIKING is seeking travel advisor feedback on its Marketing Centre.

The cruise line is looking for suggestions for how it can best serve the trade community through the centre, launched in Jan 2020 (TD 23 Jan 2020).

As a thank you for taking part, advisors who complete the survey will go into the running to win one of 10 prizes as part of an 11,000 Rewards by Viking points giveaway.

The centre aims to make it easier for advisors to sell Viking cruises to their clients, with the survey open for feedback until Fri - **CLICK HERE** to participate.

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#givetravelshot
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travelBulletin

CLICK to read

CATO is forging its own future with a new constitution, accreditation scheme and other reforms. Read more in the September issue of *travelBulletin*.

AFTA UPDATE

from the Australian Federation of Travel Agents

WITH the AFTA board meeting today, it's worth taking stock of where we are and just how much we have achieved together to date.

While many members (including Board members) continue to fight to be recognised as

eligible travel businesses under the Federal Government's very welcome COVID-19 Consumer Travel Grant program, the AFTA Board and team continue to be buoyed by the steady flow of emails confirming payments received.

Federal Tourism Minister Dan Tehan has been and continues to be a staunch advocate and AFTA certainly appreciates the ongoing access to, and advice from, the Minister and his office.

AFTA and our members continue to press the case for ongoing, sector-wide support from the government.

Just yesterday, AFTA Chair Tom Manwaring presented to the Senate's Rural and Regional Affairs Inquiry into the future of Australia's aviation sector in the context of COVID-19 and conditions post-pandemic.

The AFTA Board was grateful to have met with Committee



afta

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF TRAVEL AGENTS

Chair Senator Susan McDonald, Deputy Chair Senator Glenn Sterle, and Senator Tony Sheldon when in Canberra as part of Budget Week lobbying.

Additionally, yesterday, the

AFTA Board met remotely with opposition leader the Anthony Albanese to discuss the current state of the sector, the critical importance of us all being able to travel again internationally and across the nation, and the need for ongoing support for the entire sector until international travel normalises.

It is reassuring to see that there is widespread acknowledgement of the economic importance of our sector, the importance of retaining and growing skills and expertise, and the value of travel agents and businesses in supporting consumers.

The skills and knowledge set of travel agents are going to be even more required when we resume international travel and AFTA's message to government and consumers continues to resoundingly be "without a travel agent, you really are on your own."

Dreamliner delays

BOEING'S new delivery of 787 Dreamliners have been delayed until at least late next month.

The company has been unable to persuade US air-safety regulators to approve its proposal to inspect the aircraft following structural flaws being identified by the Federal Aviation Administration in Jul (TD 15 Jul).

The impasse has kept Boeing from moving more than US\$25 billion worth of Dreamliners, with about 100 of the aircraft still in inventory awaiting delivery at the end of Jun.

Fiji travel sooner?

FOLLOWING Federal Minister for Health Greg Hunt's announcement that the overseas travel ban has been extended to 17 Dec (TD 03 Sep), Fiji Airways CEO Andre Viljoen believes Fiji will be top of the travel list once the date to travel finally arrives.

"Come 17 Dec, Fiji Airways will be ready to welcome Aussies back to our home, reuniting families and enjoying vacations," he said.

Viljoen added Fiji Airways would be ready to operate even earlier should the opportunity arise.

Did you know?

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



Israel dips its toe

ISRAEL is preparing to launch a pilot tourist program that will see small groups of travellers enter the country from 19 Sep in a bid to restart its tourism economy.

Tour groups of between five and 30 people from nations on Israel's green, yellow and orange lists will be allowed to enter, while individual tourists will continue to be banned from entry unless they are visiting family members.

Australia is currently on Israel's orange "at risk" designation.

MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.743

THE AUDUSD eased from two-month highs overnight in a quiet session prompted largely by the US being closed for its Labor Day holiday.

The AUD was also weaker in most other major markets, with the AUDEUR falling by 0.2% overnight and the AUDJPY also dropping 0.2%.

Only a minor loss was made against the British pound, down only 0.1%.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.743
UK	£0.537
NZ	\$1.042
Euro	€0.626
Japan	¥81.67
Thailand	฿24.15
China	¥4.81
South Africa	10.58
Canada	\$0.932
Crude oil	US\$72.61

FCM building bridges



FLIGHT Centre's travel management arm, FCM, recently held a client engagement event in Perth which included a climb over the Matagarup Bridge (pictured).

On a morning which threatened to rain, the weather brightened up to deliver great views from the famous suspension bridge, whose moniker pays tribute to the indigenous name for a "place where the river is only leg deep,

allowing it to be crossed".

The event was held in partnership with Fraser Suites and Matagarup Zip+Climb and also included a pub meal for some honest customer feedback, which the company was glad to hear was "very positive".

Daddo is on board

PONANT'S first ambassador in Australia has been revealed to be entertainer Andrew Daddo.

A 45-minute documentary will be released starring Daddo called *Beyond the Polar Circle*, showcasing the Australian's previous trip to Antarctica aboard the line's *Le Boréal*, a trip Daddo recalled prompted so many pics he had to purchase more cloud space - view trailer [HERE](#).

Rottnest concerns

THE Rottnest Society has written to WA Tourism Minister David Templeman calling for greater protection of the island's Pinky Beach in the wake of a new luxury glamping resort being constructed by operator Discovery Rottnest Island.

The call comes after the conservation group alleged the project is causing undue erosion of the beach's sand dunes.

"Rottnest Island can only be retained as a tourist icon if its sensitive environment is protected," the letter stated.

Tassie wants vaccine passports

THE majority of Tasmanian businesses want vaccine passports introduced, a Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (TCCI) survey shows.

Before the borders to New South Wales and Victoria are reopened, almost two-thirds of TCCI's members (61.7%) said they would support a vaccine passport that would confirm visitors to the state were fully vaccinated.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison publicly backed the idea last week, despite resistance from some of his own party's Members of Parliament, and Tasmanian Senator Eric Abetz, who has raised concerns about potential civil liberties infringements.

EU travel confusion

ONGOING confusion over travel rules in Europe are wasting the advantages of the European Union's Digital COVID Certificate, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) has warned.

The failure of European Union member states to harmonise COVID-19 entry regulations is perplexing travellers, preventing both the leisure and business sectors from delivering the expected economic benefits of travel recovery.

Among the most significant discrepancies, around 30% of nations using the Digital COVID Certificate are not accepting rapid testing, and almost one-in-five are not exempting children from testing either.

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

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