



## Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news plus a full page from Viking Cruises.

## EK back to Bali

EMIRATES is continuing to re-establish its global network, today announcing the resumption of flights from Dubai to Bali (01 May), London Stansted (01 Aug), Rio de Janeiro (02 Nov) and Buenos Aires (02 Nov).

The carrier is also boosting frequencies to Lagos and Abuja in Nigeria, scaling up Mauritius to double daily services from Jul, and moving to 14 weekly Singapore services from 23 Jun.

The service resumptions will see EK's network expand to span more than 130 destinations across six continents.

## QF adds Bengaluru, Seoul

THE further expansion of the Qantas network into India (TD breaking news) will leverage the recent Australia-India free trade agreement, with QF CEO Alan Joyce saying the high-level pact is a "driver of travel demand as trade and investment links expand between Australia and India's population of more than one billion people".

As well as launching new non-stop Sydney-Bengaluru services, the expansion includes a codeshare deal with Indian carrier IndiGo, giving QF customers one-stop access to more than 50 destinations across the country.

The proposed pact envisages seamless transfers from QF flights in Bengaluru, Delhi or Singapore, with QF customers able to earn

and burn frequent flyer points on the codeshare services.

Connecting flights will also be offered to Jetstar customers via the Jetstar Connect platform from later this month.

Four weekly Sydney-Bengaluru services will operate from 14 Sep using Airbus A330 aircraft - the first non-stop flights between Australia and southern India ever.

Bengaluru has a population of 13 million people and is an ever-growing technology hub with strong links to Australia.

MEANWHILE the Qantas Group expansion out of Sydney also includes new QF and Jetstar services to South Korea, resuming Qantas Seoul flights for the first time in almost 15 years.

Jetstar will become the only low-cost carrier to fly directly to Korea from Sydney, plotting Boeing 787-8 services three times a week from 02 Nov 2022.

Direct Qantas Airbus A330 flights to Seoul Incheon Airport will commence on 10 Dec 2022.

Joyce said as well as providing new outbound opportunities, the routes would "make it easier for millions of people to come here".

Rebounding demand had given Qantas the confidence to launch the new services, alongside marketing support from Destination NSW.

The new routes announced this morning are all being supported by the NSW Aviation Attraction Fund, which is co-funded by the State Govt and Sydney Airport.

## Hutchinson makes a return to TTC

ANDREW Hutchinson has been appointed to a newly created role at The Travel Corporation (TTC), returning to the group on 19 Apr as General Manager Product & Contracting with AAT Kings.

He was most recently GM of Domestic and New Zealand for Tourism Australia, but prior to that spent more than four years as Head of Product & Operations at Adventure World.

In his new role, Hutchinson will be responsible for "establishing the travel experiences development strategy for AAT Kings Group, analysing trends and identifying new opportunities for the brand, contract and key partner management, and leading, managing and guiding the Product & Contracting team," the company said.

Hutchinson said he was "excited to rejoin the TTC family of brands...with the global tourism recovery underway, this presents a unique platform for the ongoing evolution of the brand's success".

## MH Amadeus deal

MALAYSIA Airlines Berhad has announced a multi-year deal with Amadeus seeing the renewal of its Altea Passenger Service System contract as well as the adoption of Altea NDC.

Under the move travel retailers will "soon be able to access Malaysia Airlines' full range of NDC-enabled content with full servicing functionalities".

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Jul - Dec 2022

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## VA invitation-only Beyond

**VIRGIN** Australia has confirmed initial details of its new invitation-only "premium loyalty program".

Previously known as The Club, Virgin Australia Beyond "is reserved for our most loyal and valued guests," according to an email sent last night by VA CEO Jayne Hrdlicka.

The relaunch of the program will also see the 20 Apr reopening of exclusive Beyond lounges in Sydney, Melbourne & Brisbane with a new a la carte menu.

Beyond memberships are being offered to selected customers, who will either be given a 12-month membership or a trial for six or nine months.

It's understood that some former members of The Club will not be receiving a membership of the new Beyond program, with those who are being retained having corporate accounts and driving commercial outcomes for the Virgin Australia business.

Those who don't make the cut will instead be gifted a Platinum Velocity membership.

Beyond members are also being invited to nominate a spouse or life partner to enjoy the same benefits and levels of service, with VA maintaining a dedicated team to look after this premium cohort of customers.

Hrdlicka said amid a strong rebound in booking demand "it was important that we moved to the next stage of our transformation journey and the reopening of these fantastic lounge spaces, which we know you've been looking forward to".

### HA to add AKL

**HAWAIIAN** Airlines will restart flights between Auckland and Honolulu from 02 Jul, with initial thrice weekly A330 frequencies.

The route was suspended two years ago due to the pandemic.

## Valuables at risk

**NEW** research from Allianz Australia has revealed that 68% of Australian travellers do not bother to insure the valuables they take with them on a holiday.

The research also showed that the contents inside the average traveller's suitcase is sometimes worth more than the holiday itself, with the latest consumer technology items significantly bumping up the value of baggage.

The three most commonly claimed portable content items are jewellery, mobile phones and computers, accounting for almost 45% of claims.

Allianz research also found that a third of people are "worried" about possessions getting damaged, leading many to store their most important valuables in their luggage (38%), in a bedside table at their accommodation (21%) or in the car (13%), with most people blaming themselves when an item gets lost while travelling.



## Window Seat

**MOST** school students find themselves making paper planes, not real ones, but don't say that to these kids from Denver (**pictured**) because to them that attitude just won't fly.

The group of high school students recently assembled their own plane as part of the Wings Aerospace Pathways program, with the FAA-approved RV-12 aircraft assembled from a kit supplied to them by the course.

And the writers at **TD** thought that Ikea furniture was hard!



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## Vega ready for Aussies

EXCLUSIVE

FRESH from travelling aboard the maiden voyage of *Travelmarvel Vega* along the Danube, APT Travel Group's CEO David Cox hailed the ship's debut a major success amid a rebounding market in Europe.

The sailing, packed full of UK travel agents, "exceeded all expectations" Cox enthused, with feedback from guests hailing *Vega* as one of the best four-star plus ships on the river.

Setting it apart from its competitors is *Vega's* two and a half decks, boasting an area at the front of the ship that remains open for the majority of the cruise, while most other ships are forced to close deck

areas due to bridges, as well as a host of onboard attractions suited to Aussie tastes, such as a barbecue area, an Irish pub, and larger indoor cabin spaces with large electric windows in lieu of balcony areas.

Cox also told **TD** that easing protocols across Europe had made taking a cruise on the continent much easier than it's been for more than two years.

"In terms of getting into the departure countries there was no paperwork at all, just a stamp on the passport...there was no test to get into Hungary and in Romania the only thing I was asked to do was a RAT 24 hours prior to departure," Cox said.

Europe is also well and truly back open for business, according to Cox, who said that in all major cities he visited as part of *Vega's* voyage, all attractions and cafes were open, no mask mandates were in place, and with a reduced number of tourists, there are less queues to access venues.

While sales for *Travelmarvel* have been slow in recent months, Cox said bookings have started to make a recent shift in the wake of increasing travel confidence.

"At the start of the year as Omicron and now the Ukraine war has had a major impact on sales, but what we've seen in the last two weeks is a spike, where there seems to be more understanding from clients about European travel," Cox said.

MEANWHILE, sweetening the deal for travel agents is a 75% discount on select 2022 May, Jun and Jul APT and *Travelmarvel* European sailings.

The promotion is valid for actively selling travel agents and one mate twin share, with solo travellers to pay a supplement of only \$1,000 per person.

Advisors can also score themselves a \$100 reward voucher for every cabin booked and deposited on select APT and *Travelmarvel* Euro cruises in 2022.



## Radisson eyes India

RADISSON Hotel Group is launching a new lifestyle brand extension in India, called Radisson Individuals Retreats, offering guests an "upper-upscale" style of lifestyle retreat, coupled with a range of exclusive experiences.

Goa, Kashmir, Coorg and Kabini have been earmarked as locations for the new brand, as well as off-the-beaten-track destinations such as the mountain ranges of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, the hills of Karnataka and Rajasthan.

Fuelling the introduction of the brand has been new research into traveller behaviour in India, which suggests tourists are becoming less enamoured with the big city attractions and want to relax and recharge in nature instead.

The news also accompanies an objective to aggressively expand the Radisson brand's footprint in India by 2025, with 148 hotels and resorts to be added to its network of 140 sites.

## Nat Geo new ship

LINDBLAD Expeditions-National Geographic has unveiled the details of its new 48-passenger expedition vessel *National Geographic Islander II*, scheduled to sail year-round in the Galapagos Islands from Aug.

Features of the vessel include 26 "light and airy" suites, an al fresco Patio Cafe, a 1:1 guest to crew ratio, and a fleet of custom-built Zodiacs.

Environmental selling points include reduced outdoor lighting and recycled water from new air conditioning systems.

## SYD gets slammed

THE busiest day of the year at Sydney Airport yesterday saw passengers wait more than two hours in long queues to board their flights for the Easter holidays, social media posts show.

The long waits were exacerbated by staff shortages due to COVID close contact rules.

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with publisher Bruce Piper and Joel Katz, Managing Director, Cruise Lines International (CLIA) Australasia and Jill Abel, CEO, Australian Cruise Association.

**The Tide Turns For Cruise**

After more than two years of international cruise ships being banned from Australian waters, the local cruise sector has finally received a green light to recommence operations. Join us at this special event as we chat with Joel Katz and Jill Abel. They will discuss all things cruise including their journey during the pandemic, the current state of the start-up, protocols, destinations and much more.

 

**WEDNESDAY 13th APRIL, 1.00pm (AEST)**

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## CORPORATE UPDATE

### US Govt denies CWT claim

**AMERICA'S** US Government Accountability Office has dismissed a formal protest by corporate travel giant CWT about the awarding of a major US Defense Department contract to rival BCD Travel.

The ruling was handed down late last month, in relation to an RFQ issued on 28 Oct 2021 by the General Services Administration on behalf of the Defense Department for TMC services.

BCD was the incumbent on the contract, having been awarded a "task order" from a previous RFQ issued in 2020 in a process which had been challenged by CWT.

A protest lodged at the Court of Federal Claims found CWT had been disadvantaged during the tender because officials "failed to perform an overall price realism analysis" as required by the RFQ.

However rather than re-evaluate BCD's original quotation, the company's contract was cancelled and the revised RFQ was issued, along with several subsequent amendments.

BCD was ultimately awarded the Defense Department TMC contract under the new RFQ, with CWT claiming that the earlier solicitation had been unlawfully

cancelled and that the revised document was "inadequate to permit vendors to compete on an intelligent basis and reflects bias in favour of BCD".

The Government Accountability Office investigated the protest, saying "we do not find that the valuation criteria are too vague and generic as to be defective".

CWT's allegations and protests were dismissed, with the arbitrator "finding no support for the protestor's contention that these actions reflect bias in favour of BCD".

View the full report at [gao.gov](https://www.gao.gov).

### Press the flesh: VA

**VIRGIN** Australia CEO Jayne Hrdlicka has declared that in-person meetings will form a vital part of Australia's wider business recovery, which will in turn fuel a resurgence in business travel.

Speaking at the launch of VA's new small and medium enterprise (SME)-focused loyalty program this week (**TD** 05 Apr), the airline's chief said that Zoom fatigue had already led to an uptick in corporate travel bookings, noting that business relationships need travel to survive in the longer term.

"Relationships are perishable assets, you have to invest to keep them healthy, and keeping them healthy requires travel," she said.

Hrdlicka added that another driver of corporate travel will be a need for businesses to improve their employee culture, which she insinuated had suffered during the pandemic due to forced isolation of workers.

"Those factors are coming together to accelerate the rate at which business is travelling, how that ultimately settles down I think, is yet to be seen but the signs are all really positive."

The comments follow a clear strategy by VA to shore up its business by chasing the corporate travel market via a range of B2B incentives unveiled this week.

### Train defeats plane

**THE** drive to travel more sustainably is permeating the corporate travel sector, according to a new report commissioned by UK rail company HS1 Ltd, which found that business travellers are now preferring to travel by train than by plane.

Opinium Research surveyed 1,000 UK workers who have travelled for business over the last five years, with two-thirds of respondents stating they would prefer to travel in the future by train over aircraft.

Respondents said their attitudes had shifted since the start of the pandemic, with the health crisis highlighting a need for businesses to offer more sustainable options.

## INTRODUCING

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## AFTA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



### YESTERDAY

AFTA was joined by the Labor Tourism spokesperson Senator Don Farrell for the first of our election

webinar series where we will be providing members and the greater travel sector an opportunity to hear from the officials who will be representing us and asking for our vote in the next six weeks.

The Senator detailed that Labor are currently finalising their election policies, which has followed listening to the industry to get a sense of the things that will really help in recovery.

We are well aware of the struggles the travel sector has gone through and AFTA has been very active in this regard.

For me, it was pleasing to hear from the Senator that the terms of travel and tourism were embedded in the way that he viewed the greater visitor

economy.

While COVID-19 has definitely thrown up challenges for all of our businesses, a bi-product is that it has moved the dial in the way that our political leaders view the travel sector and the critical role we play in the success of Australia's inbound sector.

An invitation has also been offered to the current Minister for Tourism Dan Tehan.

We look forward to welcoming him to an upcoming webinar where he'll be able to detail what the Liberal and National parties will be taking to the next federal election.

Finally last week, members of the Board were in Canberra as part of our ongoing engagement with our political leaders.

We also had a meeting with Austrade to discuss the implementation of round three and ensure they understood the need for a criteria that was flexible to ensure those businesses that should be supported are able to access it through this program.

### Spotlight on the UK

**TOURISM** Australia has this week extended its campaign in the United Kingdom in partnership with Singapore Airlines to inspire conversion with great deals to visit Australia.

According to an update on the source market from the country's peak tourism body, further marketing extensions will follow featuring Tourism Western Australia and Visit Victoria.

Tourism Australia also noted that online searches and forward bookings show that volumes are sitting close to pre-COVID levels, and almost half of bookings being made are for travel within the next three months.

High-yield leisure bookings are travelling later in the year, with the average duration and spend higher than pre-COVID levels.

### You've been warned

**THE** Australian Airports Association (AAA) is warning Australian travellers to make sure they are on their best behaviour when travelling this Easter, cautioning that an uptick in verbal abuse during the pandemic will not be tolerated by airport staff.

"As we all get used to travelling again it's also important any frustrations are not taken out on airport staff who are working harder than ever to assist passengers," AAA Chief Executive Officer James Goodwin said.

Goodwin added that the aviation industry's No More Carry On campaign will continue to be displayed on airport billboards around the country as a reminder to curb antisocial travellers.

The AAA is also suggesting travellers arrive early for flights.



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Travel & Cruise Weekly

Special Easter issue

## A guide to Adelaide

THE latest edition of the Adelaide Visitor Guide is out now, showcasing the South Australian capital's best tourist attractions.

Travellers can pick up an Adelaide Visitor Guide at the Adelaide Visitor Information Centre at 25 Pirie Street, or request one online [HERE](#).

## RATs for travelling

THE Discount Drug Store pharmacy chain is now offering Certified RATs to travellers.

The by-appointment service is available to asymptomatic customers, and provides a certificate as proof of a negative test to customers who require a test for travel abroad.

## Lonely Planet gems

LONELY Planet has announced its Ultimate Australia Travel List, ranking the top 500 unmissable experiences and hidden gems in the country.

The top 10 experiences are Uluru, the Museum of Old & New Art, the Great Barrier Reef, the Great Ocean Road, the Three Capes Track, the Bungle Bungles, Daintree National Park, Kangaroo Island, Warrumbungle Dark Sky Park, and Vivid Sydney.

Rounding out the top 20 are Wilsons Promontory, Kakadu, Freycinet National Park, the Grampians, Bondi to Coogee Walk, Kata Tjuta, Port Campbell National Park, Rottnest Island, the Manly ferry services, and the Museum of Underwater Art.

## Lots to Siebert in South Africa



INTREPID Travel's Global Corporate Communications Manager recently hopped on a plane to South Africa for the first time since the pandemic started, where she was elated by the chance to meet up with the brand's local team on the ground.

Lucy Siebert was happy to report that entry to the country is smooth since the travel protocols have been loosened, with travellers no longer needing to

supply a negative PCR result on entry if they are fully vaccinated.

She spent time with Intrepid's local team and visited the Mandela House Museum (**pictured**), and the historic Vilakazi Street in Soweto - the only street in the world to have been home to two Nobel Peace Prize winners - Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

## 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)

Intrepid has launched a sale for Australia with up to 15% off all domestic trips. Travellers can save on 60 domestic adventures for travel until 14 Dec. The sale also incorporates a small range of 30 international journeys. For more information on the sale, which runs through to the end of next month, [CLICK HERE](#).

Save 30% on your Easter long weekend with TFE Hotels' sale. The offer is available at any participating Australian hotel, as well as a number of international locations. TFE is also offering peace of mind with its flexible cancellation policy, allowing you to book up to a year in advance and cancel up to 2pm, one day before arrival. [CLICK HERE](#) to save.

Azamara's Apr limited time offer provides travellers with free wi-fi and US\$500 of shore excursion credit. On sale now, the offer is available until 29 Apr. [CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

Savings on a new three-in-one adventure cruise-tour in Alaska, Hawaii, and the Rockies has been released for next year by Cruise Traveller. Save \$5,170 per couple and \$2,970 for solos when booking by 30 Jun. The 21-night, two-cruise, one-land-segment package begins 15 Apr 2023, with a night in Seattle, and can be booked [HERE](#).

## Holy smokes Rex!

IT HAS not been a good week for Rex Airlines, which was forced to evacuate two flights this week due to engine troubles with its Saab 340 aircraft.

One incident saw 30 passengers evacuated at Melbourne Airport after smoke was detected, while a very similar incident occurred on Wed morning during a Rex flight from Roma to Brisbane.

## Round 2 events fund

ACCELERATE funding is now available to boost business events and drive economic recovery.

With meetings now back, round two of the funding is available, with the Government of New South Wales yesterday announcing up to \$60,000 for business events in Sydney, Newcastle, and Wollongong.

The matched funding offer is available for events held between Jul 2022 and Jun 2023.

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

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 CRUISE WEEKLY

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