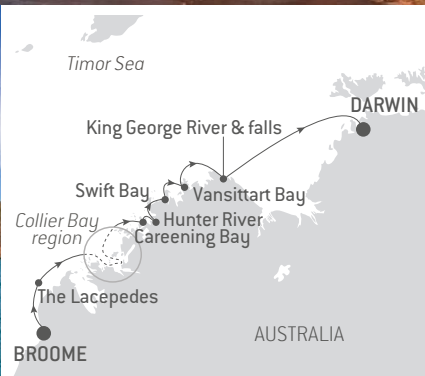




The Kimberley is just around the corner...

After more than two years, our small luxury expedition ships *Le Soléal* and *Le Lapérouse* are finally coming back to explore Australia's coastline starting April 28! With departures filling fast, now is the time to book your clients' 2022 Kimberley expedition. And, we have two new departures available this year. They won't last!

DISCOVER



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*All advertised prices are based on the Ponant Bonus fare per person, in Australian Dollars (AUD), based on a double occupancy in the best available category, including port taxes and transfer, yield managed, correct at time of printing, are subject to availability and can be changed at any time. Darwin to Broome itinerary differs from map shown. More terms and conditions apply. ABN: 35 166 676 517. Photographs : © PONANT Phillip Schubert PHOTOGRAPHY



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QF moves on Korea

QANTAS has formally requested additional capacity from the International Air Services Commission to operate its planned South Korea flights flagged in early Apr (**TD** 08 Apr).

The airline is requesting 2,193 seats on the South Korea route for its Qantas and Jetstar brands, a move that will see Jetstar become the only low-cost carrier to fly directly to South Korea from Sydney, operating three times a week from 02 Nov.

Direct Qantas Airbus A330 flights to Seoul Incheon Airport will also commence on 10 Dec, the airline has previously indicated, with the confidence to introduce the routes, alongside new Indian services, fuelled by support funding from the NSW Aviation Attraction Fund.

Qatar's biggest push yet

QATAR Tourism has stepped up efforts to reach the goal of attracting six million visitors a year by 2030, launching its largest ever international tourism marketing campaign in Australia this week.

Going live in the country on all major commercial TV networks, Qatar's new "Experience a World Beyond" campaign highlights a range of tourism experiences on offer to Aussies in the country, and is designed to convey its key theme of "blended cosmopolitan modernity with Arabic culture and tradition".

To support the major campaign push, Qatar Tourism has also revamped its travel agency training platform TAWASH, accessible **HERE**, offering advisors new training modules, added helpful destination content and a refreshed design.

The upgraded platform also offers agents an improved learning experience through

more effective functionality such as interactive maps and knowledge quizzes.

Agents can receive "Qatar Expert" status via the new training structure, which can be upgraded to "Qatar Specialist" through the completion of additional elective options, while those who have already completed the former program will automatically receive the "Qatar Expert" level.

Commenting on the renewed trade and consumer campaign, Qatar Tourism Group Chief Executive Akbar Al Baker said it marked an important juncture in the country's mass appeal to international tourists.

"The launch of the Experience a World Beyond marks a significant point in our journey to establishing ourselves as a world leading destination," he said. View the campaign site **HERE**.

Cathay sustainability

CATHAY Pacific has launched a range of new sustainability initiatives ahead of Earth Day.

Further reinstating Cathay's commitment to climate action, "Fly Greener with Cathay Pacific" will see carbon emissions offset for every customer who books between 22 Apr and 28 Apr for travel from 22 Apr through to the end of the year.

The carrier has also launched its pilot Corporate Sustainable Aviation Fuel program, which allows corporate customers to contribute to the use of SAF.

World cruise opens

MSC Cruises has opened sales for its 2024 World Cruise, which features a brand-new itinerary.

The 121-day sailing visits 31 countries and more than 50 destinations, including the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, Africa, the Americas, and Scandinavia.

Call 1300 028 502 for details.

voco gets vocal in Oz

IHG Hotels & Resorts is readying to open two landmark voco Hotels in Australia over the next two months.

"Supercharging" the brand's growth in Australia, voco Melbourne Central will open next Thu, while voco Brisbane City Centre will open on 27 May.

The brand's new Melbourne location will carry the tag of being Australia's first new-build voco Hotel, and will take up a prominent Lonsdale Street address.

Meanwhile, voco Brisbane City Centre promises to be "a hive of charming energy", with an abundance of open space, a rooftop pool, sweeping River views, and more than 1,200m² of function space.

To celebrate the opening of the new hotels, guests can experience the 'voco Life' with a tailored package featuring a range of perks - call 1800 007 697.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news including **Business Events News**, a front cover from **Ponant** and a full page from **Qatar Tourism**.

Come see Kimberley

PONANT is reminding readers that the Kimberley is just around the corner, with its small ships gearing up to sail the region after a two-year hiatus from later on this month.

Departures are filling up fast so travellers are being advised to make a booking sooner rather than later to nab a spot.

Those that miss out can take advantage of two more scheduled sailings taking place later in the year - see **cover page** for details.



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SQ/Vistara tie-up

SINGAPORE Airlines' codeshare partnership with Indian carrier Vistara has been reactivated, and is now available on SQ flights between Australia and Singapore.

Vistara will offer codeshares on Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Darwin, and Cairns flights flown by SQ, while Vistara's New Delhi and Mumbai routes to Australia via Singapore are also included in the deal.

The updated collaboration will also see SQ flights from Singapore to NZ added on services to AKL and Christchurch through SIN.

Prior to the pandemic, Vistara was expanding its presence in the local market after appointing a GSA (**TD** 26 Aug 2019), revealing a previous SQ codesharing agreement in Australia in Oct 2019 (**TD** 15 Oct 2019).

Virgin's secret goes public



VIRGIN Australia Chief Executive Officer Jayne Hrdlicka (pictured) has formally reopened the airline's new "secret airport lounges", which are accessed by invitation-only.

Located in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, the "Beyond Lounges" were opened alongside a special event yesterday at SYD, showcasing secret access through discreet doors, which are only known by, and open to members.

Reserved for corporate partners, some high-status Velocity Frequent Flyers, and key "opinion leaders" throughout Australia, the lounges contain timber cabinetry with built-in charging stations, making it easy for members to work or relax on the fly.

Transparent frosted glass also surrounds the numerous seating zones inside the lounges, allowing

for natural light to enter while maintaining privacy for those travellers resting inside.

The event also saw the revealing of the new Beyond a la carte breakfast and all-day dining menus, which includes breakfast options, sandwiches, pastas, seafood, desserts, salads and cheese boards.

JNTO retains agency

THE Lucid Agency has won the right to continue representing the Japan National Tourism Organization's (JNTO) Sydney Office in the local market after a competitive pitch.

The agency will lead the brand's PR strategy for the next 12 months, as well as provide market intelligence and competitor destination reporting, and develop audience and media target strategies.

"With business travellers and international students now able to enter Japan, the border is gradually reopening, and we expect consumer travel to be the next logical step," JNTO said, adding that it "can't wait to welcome Australians back to Japan and are looking forward to The Lucid Agency working to entice travellers considering their next Japanese adventure."

Arizona educates

THE Arizona Tourism Office has today launched the first in a series of webinars to better equip Aussie agents with the latest trip and itinerary ideas to the state.

The three-month series will include two new eight- to 10-minute webinars each month until the end of Jun, with gift card prizes valued at \$1,000 in total to be given away to participants over the series' duration.

Themes to be featured during the sessions will include national parks, road trips, luxury, wellness, culinary, adventure, astrotourism, and tribal appeal.

A grand prize for agents who watch all six webinars will also be awarded at its conclusion.

Operated through Linkd Tourism, advisors can register for the sessions by **CLICKING HERE**.

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Venice targets day trips

TRAVELLERS wanting to visit the popular Italian city of Venice for the day will soon have to book in advance through a new online registry scheme.

Venice Mayor Luigi Brugnaro unveiled the new policy this week, stating it was needed in a bid to curb the environmental damage that day trip tourism has been causing the city, with daily caps on tourists likely to be implemented down the track.

Initially the scheme will kick off with an experimental phase “in the coming weeks”, which will make signing up to the reservation system optional, offering visitors a number of incentives to get on board and participate such as discounts on museum admissions.

From the start of 2023, the system will then become mandatory for travellers wanting to visit Venice, so long as the pilot is successful, seeing daytrippers

pay between three and ten euros, depending on whether it is the peak or low season.

Describing the radical move as “the right way forward” to local media outlets, Brugnaro said the new scheme would aim to account for the number of people in the city centre at all times.

“We will be the first in the world to carry out this difficult experiment,” he said, adding that Venice needed to combat “hit and run tourism”.

Once the system becomes permanent, local authorities will begin policing the reservations at the city’s main bus and train stations, however visitors who stay overnight in Venice will be exempt from the new fee structure, as they are already subject to Venice’s so-called tourist tax (**TD** 02 Jan 2019).

Around 120,000 people visit Venice per day, a city that is home to just 55,000 residents.

Thredbo experiences

THREDBO is seeking to heighten its appeal in time for the opening of its winter season on 11 Jun, unveiling a new range of experiences which are available to book from today.

The new options include the Kareela Supper Club presented by G.H.Mumm which includes canapes and champagne whilst watching fireworks and the Flare Run from the Kareela Hutte, as well as new Discovery Tours which sees experts lead visitors to some of Thredbo’s best kept secrets on skis and snowboards.

QF still trustworthy

QANTAS was the only travel brand to rank a mention in Roy Morgan’s most trusted brands survey for Dec 2021.

The airline snagged sixth position behind Woolworths and Coles in top position, while the least trusted brands included Crown Resorts and Uber.



Window Seat

YOU may not remember your first-ever time on an aircraft, but a flight full of Fijians who recently touched down in Melbourne certainly will.

The VA flight was, as one crew member recalls, “three-quarters-full” of Fijians who were on a plane for the first time to start a new life.

After learning a credit card was needed to make an on-board food purchase, which they did not have, a noble passenger offered to step forward and pay for their meals.

A family member of the passenger in question was a recently passed VA Captain, who “would’ve wanted to pay for their meals himself”.

CEO Jayne Hrdlicka described the story as “inspirational” to the world of flying.

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BIRLEY HONoured BY PAN-PAC

PAN Pacific Hotels Group has paid tribute to the late Tim Birley, naming the boardroom at its PARKROYAL Darling Harbour property in his honour.

Birley (pictured) was the group's highly respected National BDM, who died suddenly late last month after returning to Sydney from AIME (TD 29 Mar).

The tribute recognises Birley's long-standing contribution to the business events and hospitality sector, with his death prompting an outpouring of testimonials about his thoughtfulness, care and consideration.

He was remembered last week in a gathering convened by his family, friends, associates and industry colleagues, with many present remembering his contribution to the industry.

Pan Pacific Hotels Group Senior BDM Sarah Hegarty noted on a LinkedIn post that "in true Tim



fashion the event was held in the restaurant at PARKROYAL Darling Harbour - for he had sold every conference room".

Colleague Charmaine Hardwick described him as a legend of the sector, saying "with 35 plus years

in this industry he was never jaded nor complacent, but a passionate sales professional".

"Tim's attention to detail and guest-centric focus was renowned within Pan Pacific Hotels and also in the industry," she said.

PCMA board

PROFESSIONAL

Conference Managers Association (PCMA) MD APAC Florence Chua has announced details of its 15-strong regional advisory board, which will act as local ambassadors to "amplify the voice and presence of PCMA within the APAC region".

Australian board members include Teagan Seccombe, Head of Events at Harcourts International and Deanna Varga, founder of Mayvin Global who have both been appointed to two year terms.

The group also includes Paula Rowntree, Head of Events at the Australian Psychological Society; and Karen Bolinger, former Melbourne Convention Bureau chief and now "Chief Disruptor" at Karen Bolinger Consulting.

Berlin support

THE German city of Berlin has announced a comprehensive "relaunch program" aiming to help the local event sector emerge from the pandemic stronger than ever.

Initiatives include global marketing campaigns, an extension of the Berlin Congress Fund which provides funding for events held in the city, and a new MICE Acquisition Task Force to attract new meetings.

VisitBerlin CEO Burkhard Kieker said the measures would provide "a significant boost to trade show and conference business".

One of the major initiatives is BESTIVAL2022, a special gathering in Aug this year inviting German and international representatives from the global MICE sector - for details [CLICK HERE](#).

Te Pae Qualmark

NZ'S Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre has received a Gold Sustainable Tourism Business Award from accreditation body Qualmark.

The accolade builds on Te Pae's earlier achievement of Toitu enviromark gold certification, reflecting its commitment to safe and sustainable operations.

"Very early on in our journey at Te Pae Christchurch we set a standard for how we want to operate and work with clients, suppliers and our industry," said the venue's GM Ross Steele, with the centre performing very well in the economic, environment and culture categories.

"Sustainability and strong focus on customer service are key pillars for us, and it's humbling to see our efforts recognised with gold by the Qualmark team."

Cairns bouncing back from COVID

THE Cairns Convention Centre is experiencing a welcome return of activity, with more than 25 conferences set to be hosted there between now and the end of the year.

Over 8,000 delegates will experience the newly refurbished venue, with GM Janet Hamilton saying the activity will significantly help the region's tourism operators and help fill hotel rooms.

"It is great to see associations and corporates gaining confidence and confirming national and international events," she said.

Alongside the conferences coming to Cairns, the Centre is also hosting a range of public events including seminars, graduations, banquets and musical performances.

Three recently secured conferences including the International Network for Social

Network Analysis (SUNBELT), as well as the Australian Menopause Society Conference and the Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference.

The upgraded Cairns Convention Centre features contemporary light interiors, state-of-the-art audio visual equipment and new building systems.

There's also a large outdoor terrace overlooking the Trinity Inlet "which will certainly make for great networking and immersion into our tropical lifestyle," Hamilton enthused.

Organisers can also apply for funding support through the Qld Government Convention and Exhibition Centre Economic Recovery Bid Support Program, which is hoped to bring more national conferences to the region over the next three years.

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Travel Daily



APPOINTMENTS

WELCOME to Industry Appointments, *Travel Daily's* Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

Desert & Delta Safaris has named **MC Odumetse** as its new Group Managing Director. Odumetse has revolutionised the hospitality industry in Botswana during his more than 10 years in management with the company, promoting female empowerment, and implementing innovative environmental conservation practices.

Dusit International has appointed **Prateek Kumar** as its new Senior Vice President – Operations. Kumar will be responsible for overseeing the operations of properties in EMEA, India, the Philippines, Singapore, the Maldives, Japan, and selected properties in Thailand.

Plaza Premium Group has strengthened its presence in Canada with the new hire of **Pascal Belanger** as its local Senior Vice President Commercial Development & Operations. He will report to Chief Operating Officer Sylvio Angelone.

Cruise industry professional **Mark Robinson** has joined **Scenic Group** as Vice President Cruise Operations. He comes to Scenic with more than 35 years of industry experience, including cruise port and ship operations.

Bottling celeb power

HAWAIIAN Airlines has enlisted the help of *Game of Thrones* star Jason Momoa to remove 284,000 plastic bottles from its air operations annually.

The carrier has partnered with Momoa's Water Company Mananalua to supply its Premium Cabins with aluminium bottles instead of plastic varieties, to be made available on all US east coast and international flights.

"Our Mananalua partnership helps us continue to phase out single-use plastics and protect our oceans and environment," HA's Chief Marketing and Communications Officer Avi Mannis said.

The Mananalua water company was founded by actor, environmentalist, and Hawaiian-native, Jason Momoa, in a bid to eliminate single-use plastic.

First net zero hotel

HOTEL Marcel, which is thought to be the first net-zero hotel in the United States, is slated to open in the northern spring.

The all-electric hotel will use solar power to generate electricity for its lighting, heating, cooling, and hot water.

Hotel Marcel is currently accepting reservations from 19 May and beyond, and is the result of the vision of lead architect, developer and owner, Becker + Becker's Bruce Redman Becker.

He purchased the building, which originally opened in 1970 as the Armstrong Rubber Company Headquarters, and modernised it with sustainability as the key focus.

Currently known as the Pirelli Tire Building, the structure is listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places.

Ethiad to reduce its trail

ETIHAD Airways is gearing up to operate 30 commercial test flights this week which will experiment with new technologies designed to mitigate the carrier's long-term carbon footprint.

The week-long program will take off tomorrow in partnership with UK-based green aerospace company Satavia, with the majority of flights testing out new ways to prevent contrails, which the carrier claims causes the equivalent to 2% of all human impact on the planet's climate.

Integrating atmospheric modelling shows that aircraft contrails, condensation trails made up of aircraft-generated ice crystals, cause a net surface heating effect globally by trapping atmospheric heat, accounting for around 60% of aviation's total

climate impact.

Ethiad will also operate 13 dedicated "EcoFlights" testing flight and engine optimisation initiatives, with successful trials to be incorporated into regular scheduled operations.

Each of the flight tests will be operated on Ethiad's fleet of A350 and 787 aircraft, including the Ethiad Greenliner, as well as the airline's newest plane, the Sustainable 50.

"The tests we're conducting this week are just the latest initiatives in our long running and comprehensive sustainability program because for us sustainability is a priority every day, not just once a year when it's convenient and expected," Ethiad's Group Chief Executive Officer Tony Douglas said.

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