



SQ/UA adds Perth

UNITED Airlines has expanded its codeshare agreement with Singapore Airlines to add nine new destinations for clients, including Perth, which is a new city on the US carrier's network.

Further cities include Siem Reap, KL, Jakarta, and more.

Virgin makes debut in Oz

VIRGIN Voyages is set to call Australia home, with its third ship, *Resilient Lady*, to be based at Station Pier in Port Melbourne from 2023 (TD breaking news).

Resilient Lady will first make her way to Australia on a 44-night trans-continental voyage from Athens to Sydney, which was originally made public earlier this year (TD 28 Feb).

She will then travel to destinations across Australia, including Hobart, Burnie, and Sydney, as well as New Zealand, on cruises ranging from two to 14 nights in duration.

Swissport deal

SWISSPORT has launched a lounge partnership with Luxury Escapes, further strengthening the OTA's offering to travellers and airline partners at Australia's four largest airports.

The partnership means international lounge passes will be offered as part of Luxury Escapes' deals or as an optional extra to members.

The lounges will be co-branded 'Luxury Escapes', and will showcase some of the best locations and hotels the OTA has to offer.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of news, plus a full page from Norwegian Cruise Line.

Resilient Lady will be in Australia from Dec 2023 to Mar 2024, with reservations now open alongside a launch sale of up to 30% off voyage fares.

Virgin Group founder Richard Branson described the Aussie debut as an exciting milestone for the brand.

"Australia has a very special place in my heart," he said.

"For more than 50 years, Virgin companies have been innovating and making industries better for our customers.

"Virgin Voyages is very much charting its own path, offering a fresh perspective on cruise travel with all the elements of the Virgin experience that people love."

The announcement coincides with Virgin's First Mates Roadshow, which this month is touring major Aussie cities.

Burnes super fund HLO selldown

HELLOWORLD Directors Andrew and Cinzia Burnes have sold almost all of the shares in the company which were held by their joint self-managed superannuation fund.

Longbush Nominees Pty Ltd is the trustee for the Burnes Superannuation Fund, and sold 542,898 ordinary fully paid shares on 21 Apr for a total of \$1.46m.

Longbush still holds 10,000 Helloworld shares, worth \$27,200 at yesterday's \$2.72 closing price.

Travel jobs webinar

THE Travel Community Hub has opened registrations for a free webinar to discuss the critical issue of industry employment.

Taking place on 02 May, it features CRC Travel Jobs' Richard Kellaway and Amber Jackson from TAG Group - register [HERE](#).

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UNESCO World Heritage Sites and their economic implications, cruise is coming back, travel's surprise win and more in the April issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read

travelBulletin

Shine Bright sale

VIRGIN Australia is offering 500,000 one-way domestic Economy fares from \$45 as part of its Shine Bright Sydney sale.

The discounted tickets are available until midnight 02 May, and include routes between Sydney and Perth, Sydney to Balina and Brisbane to Newcastle.



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Etihad flexes green book

ETIHAD has released its latest Sustainability Report, where it outlines ambitions to achieve a 20% reduction in emissions for its passenger fleet by 2025, cut 2019 net emissions by 50% by 2035, and reach the ultimate goal of net zero emissions by 2050.

The carrier also listed a number of key sustainability achievements during the 2020/21 period, including the reduction of its carbon emissions by 56%, albeit assisted by reduced operations brought on by the pandemic.

Etihad has also restructured its fleet strategy to focus on more fuel-efficient aircraft, with the Boeing 787 and Airbus

A350 forming the backbone of its modern fleet, while also introducing the first aircraft carbon offset program in the Middle East.

"We need to be bold in facing this issue, we need to be decisive, there is no other way forward and that is why we have been insistent that we continue to focus on the question as a long-term strategic priority for our business," EY's Group CEO Tony Douglas said.

MEANWHILE in further sustainability developments, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings has pledged its commitment to pursue net zero emissions by 2050 across its operations and value chain.

The cruise company, parent of NCL, Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises, has identified the reduction of carbon intensity, exploring alternative fuels, and carbon offset schemes as its three main pillars to hit the 2050 goal.

Sell MH and score

MALAYSIAN Airlines has brought back its Sales Reward Scheme, offering travel agents the chance to earn points towards a free flight.

Valid for all Australia and New Zealand-based frontline travel advisors, the incentive will offer the accrual of points for tickets on ex Australian routes to Malaysia and beyond issued from now until 31 Jul, with all earned travel needing to be taken by 31 Dec.

Agents will also need to have accrued 120 points to earn a free flight to Malaysia in Economy class, while 200 points will need to be stored to access a Business class flight.

Register to participate in the scheme by **CLICKING HERE**.

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Window Seat

WE'VE heard of piles of gold, but this is ridiculous.

A man has been arrested at India's Jaipur Airport after officials found about 800 grams of pure gold concealed in his rectum.

Authorities decided to conduct a probe after the man was spotted "looking suspicious" (or extremely uncomfortable?) after arriving on an Air Arabia flight from Sharjah.

A "personal search" by security officers found yellowish granules packed in three transparent polythene capsules up his backside, with the accused now facing smuggling and money laundering charges.

Now that's something you probably won't see on Channel 7's *Border Security*.

Change at the top for Carnival Corp

CARNIVAL Corporation has announced that its CEO and President, Arnold Donald, will step aside on 01 Aug and become Vice Chair of the company's board of directors.

He'll be replaced by 48-year-old Josh Weinstein, currently Chief Operations Officer, who is being promoted to lead Carnival after a 20 year career with the business.

"I am truly humbled to take up the role of CEO and honoured to lead such a talented team of over 100,000 ship and shoreside team members who do such an incredible job in delivering unforgettable, happy vacations to our guests day in and day out," Weinstein said.

He paid tribute to Donald's guidance and mentoring, with the outgoing CEO having successfully driven Carnival to record results as well as steering the company through the pandemic.

Mehdi Juddani mourned

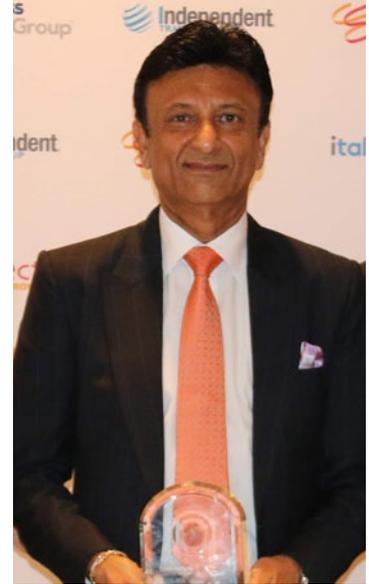
THE travel industry has been in mourning following the sudden death last week of Mehdi Juddani (pictured), the entrepreneurial founder of subcontinental specialist Best & Less Travel.

Juddani, who was 65, started the business 27 years ago, initially as a one man band which grew to have more than 80 staff at its peak before the pandemic.

The business (and Mehdi) became a key part of the Indian community within Australia, participating in a host of cultural and religious charity events.

Best & Less Travel was also a perennial top performer with airlines and within the Express Travel Group, winning a host of awards over the years.

Mehdi also helped one of his sons, Mirza, launch the brand skiddoo.com.au which at one stage was the fastest growing OTA in Australia and was ultimately acquired by Helloworld.



Although impacted by the pandemic, Best & Less Travel is now once again back on a growth trajectory under the stewardship of another son, Murad Juddani who is leading the group into a new future.



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\$60m pledge for Tassie

THE Federal Labor Party has pledged to fund a runway expansion at Hobart International Airport if they are elected to government at the upcoming federal election on 21 May.

Shadow Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, Catherine King, was in Tasmania this week to make the announcement, where she stated the upgrade of Hobart Airport's runway and facilities would precipitate the launch of new direct long-haul flights to the city.

"Infrastructure investments like this unlock massive potential", King said, adding the investment would have "lasting benefits for the state, driving the economy forward and creating thousands of secure local jobs."

Hobart Airport CEO Norris Carter said Tasmania was the only state without a Code E standard

runway and the Labor promise will put Tasmania on the map in terms of direct, widebody air services to the rest of the world.

"While the runway has been long enough for widebody aircraft, it has not been strong enough for sustained regular services, but this potential undertaking will make this a thing of the past," he said.

Uber in court

ANOTHER digital travel platform has found itself in trouble with the ACCC, with the consumer watchdog implementing proceedings in the Federal Court against Uber for allegedly misleading consumers via the Uber ridesharing app.

The ACCC believes Uber was charging cancellation fees to consumers during supposed free cancellation periods between Dec 2017 and Sep 2021.

AFTA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



AS DISCUSSED in last week's column, I had the pleasure of meeting with the opposition leader and Shadow Treasurer in

Queensland before the debate on Wed.

While speaking about the travel industry's important workforce challenges, the announcement of the security arrangements between China and the Solomon Islands meant a discussion on the importance of a stable Pacific ensued.

Both Labor leaders were keen to understand and discuss the role that travel plays in Australia's ongoing diplomatic positioning in the Pacific.

In these discussions, I also spoke to both leaders about the impact of Australians booking using an Australian travel agent, travelling to the Pacific, and the crucial role it continues to play in promoting Australian culture and influence.

We discussed that Australia is the largest contributor of tourists to the Pacific, creating important long-term employment

opportunities in the region.

Conversely we also discussed the opportunities it provides Australians to gain a greater understanding of our important Pacific family.

The importance of cultural exchange leading to greater connectivity between cultures is always highlighted for me on important national days on the calendar such as ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day, and one I very much reflected upon over the last weekend.

Our ability to interact with, visit, experience, and gain a greater appreciation for different people through travel will always assist the world in avoiding conflict.

AFTA is currently conducting research into the impact of international travel by Australians to the Pacific and other developing countries.

As I have spoken about many times, international travel by Australians is Australia's largest import, but also our largest contributor to most economies around the world.

Now more than ever, we need to keep borders open and remove restrictions as quickly and safely as possible.



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PONANT primed for restart



IT'S been a long time coming, but the cruise restart is finally on our doorstep, with PONANT leading the way tomorrow when its first departure from Darwin to Broome sets off aboard *Le Laperouse* (**TD** yesterday) which arrived in the NT capital on Mon.

PONANT Asia Pacific Chair, Sarina Bratton, greeted the ship's arrival and met with

Captain Xavier Rutten (**pictured**) in a reunion which celebrates the recommencement of international cruising here.

Bratton said as well as fulfilling the cruising dreams of thousands of Aussies, the restart is a major milestone for north-west Indigenous communities whose income relies on the international expedition cruise sector.

HA to offer free wi-fi

HAWAIIAN Airlines has announced an agreement with Elon Musk's SpaceX to provide complimentary high-speed broadband internet access to all customers on flights between Australia, NZ and Honolulu as well as inter-island and continental US services.

HA is the first major carrier to announce an agreement with SpaceX's Starlink, with the carrier's Airbus A330 and A321neo aircraft to be equipped with the technology, as well as an incoming fleet of Boeing 787-9s.

CEO Peter Ingram said the carrier had "waited until technology caught up with our high standards for guest experience," with the system powered by Starlink's low-Earth orbit constellation of satellites which utilise a laser mesh network to ensure reliability.

The carrier expects to begin installing the product on select aircraft sometime in 2023.

NYC Hard Rock

HARD Rock International has opened the new Hard Rock Hotel New York, with the property also home to an integrated state-of-the-art performance studio and entertainment hub.

The new property is in midtown Manhattan, and guests will be able to immerse themselves in the music-themed decor and also get healthy via the Rock Om program which "fuses the practice of yoga with the rhythm of a custom DJ-curated soundtrack".

PNG DFAT alert

THE Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has issued an updated travel advice for Papua New Guinea, warning of communal unrest in Kokopo in East New Britain.

Aussies are advised to avoid crowds, minimise movement, stay vigilant and follow the instructions of local authorities.

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Blissful beginnings

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has commenced its 2022 Alaskan season with *Norwegian Bliss* departing from the Port of Seattle over the weekend, marking the first of any cruise ship to visit the US state season.

Passengers on board the vessel will explore the southeast of Alaska, including the passage through the Glacier Bay National Park, the Mendenhall Glacier located close by to Juneau, as well as the Misty Fiords National Monument near Ketchikan.

“We have nearly three decades of history cruising Alaska, pioneering voyages to The Last Frontier from Seattle more than 22 years ago and christened the largest cruise ship in Seattle in 2018 with the debut of *Norwegian Bliss*,” NCL President and Chief Executive Officer Harry Sommer said.

Norwegian Sun will also return to Alaska on 05 May - call 1300 255 200 for Alaskan details.

Purchases on the hop

PENNINGTON Cliffs Property Trust, backed by Melbourne property developer Ross Pelligra, has snapped up a number of key tourism assets on South Australia’s Kangaroo Island.

The spree of purchases included The Seafront Hotel on the esplanade at Penneshaw, Seafront Holiday and Caravan Park and Penneshaw Hotel (**pictured**), and The Terraces self-contained accommodation site in American River.

The group, which is also developing a \$20m golf course on Kangaroo Island, is now in the process of planning a series of upgrades at each of its newly purchased sites.



IT’S been a tough couple of days for this group of Aussies and Kiwis aboard Celebrity Cruises’ new *Celebrity Beyond*, with a packed program ensuring they experience as much as possible of *Beyond’s* array of culinary, wellness and entertainment options.

The two-day shakedown has seen *Beyond* head off into the English Channel from Southampton, where she returns tomorrow to pick up her first complement of paying passengers.

Pictured drawing breath before the next activity/gourmet meal/cocktail/spa treatment are Matthew Dow, Hunter Travel Group; Jacinta Berle, Travel Associates; Fiona Heron,

Celebrity Cruises; Jeff Leckey, House of Travel; Stacey Ward, Phil Hoffmann Travel; Evan Pierce, Virtuoso; Vanessa Tokatly, Travel Associates; Hannah Taylor, Celebrity Cruises; Ash Ghasemi, Dreamlines/Cruise1st; Maddie Dann, Hunter Travel Group; and Kristy Johnston, Cruise.co.

Mercure Takayama

ACCOR will welcome its first hotel in Takayama, Japan, after signing the development deal for the Mercure Hida Takayama.

The property will open its doors in Dec, and offer guests 161 rooms, two dining experiences, as well as indoor and outdoor onsens on the top floor.

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Air NZ plots AKL "campus"

AIR New Zealand this morning advised staff of plans to centralise its Auckland operations, bringing all of its currently city-based staff under one roof at a refurbished campus at Auckland Airport.

The project includes the construction of a new aircraft hangar, along with a four-year investment to create a "world-class aviation facility for Air NZ employees and its aircraft as the airline rebuilds".

CEO Greg Foran said the move would future-proof the carrier's infrastructure and also reduce its ongoing property costs.

"We've spent the last two years looking at how we can set ourselves up for success as we revive our airline," he said.

"We know we work best when we work together, and we have plenty of underutilised space at the airport campus to make that happen...we'll be creating an environment where the

people who plan our future work alongside those who operate our aircraft and work with our customers every day," Foran said.

"Globally, this way of working is delivering exceptional results for customers and shareholders, and this is the right time to get ready for a move as we prepare for the global recovery in aviation."

Foran said the majority of Air NZ staff are based in Auckland, and it's expected they will move to the airport facility in 2024.

He said Air New Zealand was already paying for a precinct at the airport which has more than enough space to meet "even our most ambitious growth projections," and with building costs increasing and CBD leases coming to an end, "now is the time to get started on the work to bring our people together".

He said the move was also an opportunity to set up a world class hybrid work environment.

Chatting with the future of travel



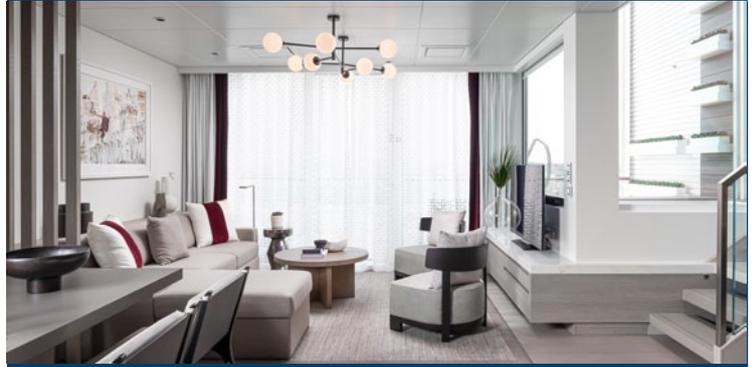
TRAVELLERS Choice General Manager Sales Nicola Strudwick (pictured centre) recently took time out to deliver a guest talk at Edith Cowan University to talk up the benefits of a career in tourism via opportunities presented through Young Skal Perth.

"There is always something valuable that can be learnt through challenges and the changes our industry has had to adapt to and I was grateful to

share my insights with such open-minded students," Strudwick said.

The travel leader had been directly involved with Skal International Australia until Feb 2021, when she stepped down from being the organisation's President.

Young Skal Perth defines its mission as recruiting and boosting the career prospects of students in WA seeking success in local and international tourism.



Edge Villa

Celebrity Beyond takes the two-storey Edge Villa concept introduced on sister ship *Celebrity Edge* to a new level, with a redesign including outdoor plunge pools adjacent to the spacious living area (pictured). The master bedroom is upstairs along with a huge bathroom, while two additional guests can be accommodated on a sofa bed downstairs where there are additional bathroom facilities. Edge Villa guests are part of The Retreat, the exclusive resort-within a resort with a two-storey sundeck, exclusive bar and lounge and private restaurant Luminae.

New Hawaii permits

AUTHORITIES in Hawaii have launched a new system which will require advanced reservations in order to visit the popular Leahi Diamond Head State Monument.

The new reservation system becomes effective 12 May, and aims to mitigate environmental impacts sustained by foot traffic.

Utah woos Aussies

PARK City Convention & Visitors Bureau is launching a new five-part video series featuring travel adventurer Jason Dundas to showcase the Utah destination.

Watch the new Utah tourism series [HERE](#).

Disabled ski pass

VAIL Resorts has launched the Epic Australia Adaptive Pass in partnership with Disabled Wintersport Australia to provide equal access for eligible guests with impairments to ski and ride at its Australian resorts.

Now on sale, The Epic Australia Adaptive Pass is priced at \$549 for adults, \$299 for students and \$409 for seniors, offering unrestricted and unlimited skiing and riding at Perisher, Falls Creek and Hotham with no price rise during the 2022 season.

The pass is available to Disabled Wintersport Australia members and National Companion Card holders.



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We got there in the end Andy



A GROUP of former Magellan Travel staff recently got together for a long overdue lunch in Melbourne to finally celebrate the retirement of long-term Magellan leader Andrew Macfarlane, who announced his departure from the business back in 2020 (**TD** 25 Nov 2020).

As a result of various COVID lockdowns, Macfarlane was unable to enjoy a proper send off in 2020, however that was all put to rest with a proper farewell and good luck from his tight-knit team last week, with former Magellan Travel Group National Business Manager Scott Darlow gushing in his praise of his one-time boss and mentor.

"To us Andrew was more than just our manager, he was a true leader, visionary, guide and mentor who moulded this small team together to become the leading agency consortia head office team in the land and all remain very close friends to this day," Darlow said.

"Andrew's place in the industry's history is cemented as he drove industry change which benefitted

all agents and he deserves to look back in retirement with fond memories, but seriously, now in retirement how much gardening and surfing can one do on the Victorian South Coast - especially in winter."

Macfarlane led the Magellan Travel Group for more than a decade, adding to an impressive resume which also included management stints at STA Travel, Air New Zealand and Jetstar.

Pictured enjoying lunch at Tippy Tay Restaurant in Melbourne near Magellan's old spiritual home on Exhibition Street are: ex Magellan staff David Stafford, Paula Phillips, Scott Darlow, Michelle Kerr, Andrew Macfarlane & Mitch How.

Brilliant Lady in red

VIRGIN Voyages has unveiled the name of its fourth ship, *Brilliant Lady*, with destinations and itineraries to be announced by the cruise line soon.

Brilliant Lady represents the smart, thoughtful, boundary-pushing minds of women around the world - unafraid of owning their intelligence," the line said.

ACCOMMODATION

WELCOME to Accommodation Updates, *Travel Daily's* Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.



StayWell has signed **Park Regis by Prince Deira Islands, Dubai**. The Park Regis by Prince brand is a significant evolution of the Park Regis line, which first launched in 2006. The new hotel will serve as the brand's launch, and will be a resort style property providing guests with direct beach access, and sea views from 95% of the property's rooms. It is designed to be "exceptional yet accessible" for guests travelling for business and leisure.



A renovation of sustainable chalet-style cabins on Devil Track Lake in Minnesota, the **Minne Stuga**, has been completed. Originally an early 70s kit home, the property is now a weekend retreat and vacation rental bathed in natural light and clad in sustainable Kebony wood. The cabin provides the perfect location for guests to relax and enjoy the natural surroundings, with fishing, kayaking, and swimming all on the property's doorstep.



Best Western Hobart has unveiled an updated new look at its downtown location. Showing off an updated appearance and newly renovated restaurant, all 141 rooms have also been refreshed with new furnishings, carpet, linens, pillows, bathrooms, and more. Centrally located in Hobart and famous for its sweeping balcony views of Mt Wellington, the Embers Bar & Grill has also been transformed, with new carpeting and updated seating.

Scared to fly: survey

MORE than a third of British travellers will choose not to fly this year due to ongoing confusion over COVID-related health requirements, a new study compiled by YouGov ahead of the Future Aviation Forum suggests.

Crown buy delayed

CROWN Resorts has been informed by its proposed acquirer Blackstone Group (**TD** 14 Feb) that it has been delayed in obtaining regulatory approvals for gaming to proceed to the final purchase on schedule.

Blackstone did however note that "good progress" had been made, with Crown Resorts this week confirming that the originally scheduled Scheme Meeting has been pushed back from 29 Apr to 20 May.

Luxury arrives in NZ

A NEW boutique luxury hotel is gearing up to open in Christchurch in Jun, with The Mayfair Christchurch to offer 67 rooms across five storeys.

The Mayfair Luxury Hotels property will also feature Majestic at Mayfair, an eatery with a bespoke a la carte menu, accompanied by high tea options, and a premium cocktail bar.

Recently appointed GM Rick Crannitch will bring previous experience in the hospitality market in Melbourne to the Kiwi hotel, stating The Mayfair will aim to bring approachable luxury.

"The Mayfair is a fresh take on luxury, meaning that luxury no longer means formality, instead it's relaxed, thoughtful, and welcoming at every touchpoint: a beautiful space, complemented by attentive service," he said.

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