



LATAM goes daily

LATAM will increase its services from Sydney via Auckland to Santiago, Chile from three times a week to daily from tomorrow.

The carrier said that since restarting flights in Mar, LATAM had experienced “significant demand” from Aussies, prompting further discussions with Sydney Airport to increase its number of services.

SYD carpark update

CAR rental operators have issued updates on their rejigged operations due to the abrupt closure of the P1 carpark at Sydney Airport (TD 30 Nov).

The airport is providing free shuttle buses operating from the terminals to car rental depots.

However, customers must have an existing rental agreement in place prior to boarding the transfers, and passengers are advised to allow for at least 30 minutes additional transit time.

Intrepid grows First Nations

INTREPID has grown its number of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences from 12 in 2019 to over 50 by Jun 2022, according to the company's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) progress report.

Commitments made by the tour operator when it joined the RAP network in 2019 have seen it engage with 41 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers in expanding its range of Indigenous adventures, with the majority of new First Nations tour product introduced in Western Australia, accounting for 13 experiences alone, followed by the NT (eight), and South Australia (six).

The report also showed the strides Intrepid has made to forge stronger relationships with First Nations communities, including the implementation of cultural training for all tour leaders on how to conduct an Acknowledgement of Country at

the start of every trip, offering its team the opportunity to join Aboriginal-led walking tours or virtual tourism experiences, and participating in the first pilot culture tour training program in Victoria run by the Taungurung Land & Waters Council.

“Our customers have told us that experiencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait cultures is literally changing the way they see the world, and we're learning so much as a business through working with more First Nations suppliers,” Intrepid Managing Director ANZ Brett Mitchell said.

Meanwhile, Intrepid staff also now have the option to work on 26 Jan and take an alternative day off, in recognition that Australia Day is not a celebration for First Nations Australians, while its website has adopted an Aboriginal dual-naming approach for key Australian capital cities.

Read the full report [HERE](#).

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of news.

Tour Atlas hybrid

TOUR Atlas has today announced the launch of the “first B2B hybrid platform in the travel space”, enhancing the company's existing API-powered product with additional passive content from other suppliers.

The hybrid platform allows travel advisors to do a single search for a destination, with results delivered from both itineraries with live availability and pricing, as well as suppliers offering brochure product.

Tour Atlas co-founder, Alex Obleshchuk, said the move was due to feedback from suppliers and agents about the challenges they face in the new landscape.

“It was clear we could use our innovative technology to create a solution, and we believe the hybrid platform is it,” she said.

See tour-atlas.com.

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Tass joins Locomote

TASS Messinis has today been appointed to a new Strategic Advisor role with Locomote.com, including a position as a non-executive Director on the company's advisory board.

Messinis, who recently finished up as BCD Travel's Managing Director for Australia, is Chair of the Association of Travel Management Companies and has over 30 years of corporate travel industry leadership experience.

"I'm delighted to be reunited with Locomote as they enter a new phase of their growth and expansion strategy," Messinis said.

Locomote Co-Founder and CEO, Ross Fastuca, said "having Tass back as a strategic advisor is the perfect step forward for the business".

Bowman to lead WTAAA

ANDREW Bowman from the Travel Agents Association of New Zealand (TAANZ), has been elected as Chair of the World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA).

Bowman, who is a Director of NZ Travel Brokers and Director and immediate Past President of TAANZ, was chosen for the global role at the WTAAA General Assembly which took place in Athens, Greece last week.

WTAAA is the global voice of the travel agency community, advocating on behalf of its members while facilitating the exchange of ideas and information for the betterment of the community worldwide.

Member organisations include AFTA (Australia), TAANZ (NZ), ACTA (Canada), ASTA (USA), ECTAA (Europe), ASATA (South Africa), SIPA (Hong Kong), KATA (South Korea), FOLATUR (South America), CEAV (Spain), FATA (Southeast Asia) and TAFI (India).

WTAAA interacts with supplier partners representing all aspects of travel agency distribution including airlines, hoteliers, cruise lines, GDS and other technology providers as well as government entities, with a key role interceding on IATA matters and participating in multiple IATA forums impacting travel agents.

Australia has also had a long involvement with WTAAA, with the Alliance in the past chaired by former AFTA CEO Jayson Westbury (TD 16 Apr 2014),

NSW TAFE info day

TAFE NSW is inviting people to consider a career in travel and tourism by seeking to gain a nationally recognised TAFE qualification in 2023.

There will be info sessions hosted for Travel and Tourism qualifications this Wed 07 Dec, at 11am and 5.30pm.

For further details, email fiona.cox2@tafensw.edu.au.

while Mike Hatton, who headed AFTA prior to Westbury, was one of the founders of the global organisation and stepped down as chair after his retirement from AFTA (TD 11 Aug 2010).

The Alliance has also previously had a Kiwi chair, in the form of now BCD Travel NZ chief Peter Barlow, who led the organisation from 2010 to 2014.

Last week's Athens General Assembly also elected Paula Cortes Calle from Colombia and Wendy Paradis from the Association of Canadian Travel Agencies (ACTA) as Vice Chairs.

Eric Dresin from Belgium (representing Europe) is Board Secretary, while Denmark's Lars Thykier is WTAAA Treasurer, while Committee Chairs include Mark Meader (USA) as Chair of the Land and Sea Advocacy Committee, and South Africa's Otto de Vries as Chair of the Air Advocacy Committee.

Current AFTA CEO Dean Long was not at the Athens WTAAA meeting, but was on the Alliance's Board some years ago when he was the Federation's National Manager of Strategy & Policy (TD 14 Nov 2014).

Polaris incident

A PASSENGER from the United States was killed while on board *Viking Polaris* last week, after a rogue wave hit the vessel while sailing to Ushuaia, Argentina.

The impact of the wave reportedly shattered glass from a window which fatally struck the woman, while four other guests also sustained non-lethal injuries during the same incident.

As a result of the accident, the cruise line said it had opted to cancel the ship's Antarctic Explorer itinerary, which was due to set sail today.

"We are investigating the facts surrounding this incident and will offer our support to the relevant authorities," Viking said in a statement following the tragedy.

AirAsia GC return

AIRASIA X is expanding its network in Australia, with the return of its Kuala Lumpur - Gold Coast service.

AirAsia X CEO Benyamin Ismail said there was "overwhelming demand" for the carrier's return to the Gold Coast, after it ceased the route in Jul 2020 during the height of the pandemic (TD 21 Jul 2020).

The announcement follows the airline's recent return to Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, with additional frequencies to Sydney and Melbourne set to be introduced this month.

To celebrate the return of the Gold Coast route, AirAsia is offering one-way Economy tickets for under \$299, and one-way Premium Flatbed for under \$1,999.

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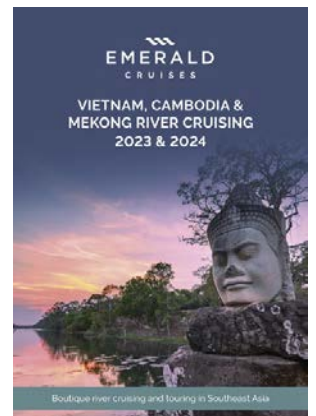
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Alloggio's Perfect purchase

ALLOGGIO has continued its recent run of acquisitions by purchasing short-term rental accommodation business A Perfect Stay for \$11 million. The acquiree offers around 270 holiday properties to travellers for brief stays in areas such as the Gold Coast, Byron Bay and Melbourne's CBD.

Alloggio confirmed that the daily operations of A Perfect Stay will continue to be run by the existing management team before being shifted onto Alloggio's proprietary cloud-based technology platform in the first quarter of next year.

The acquisition brings the company's total hotel properties under management to more than 2,200, and follows a spate of purchases over the last 12 months, including most recently in Aug when the company bought Sydney-based marketing and distribution platform Aabode.com (TD 15 Aug), expanding its reach into the luxury accommodation

sector along Australia's eastern seaboard.

Before that, Alloggio acquired Prestige Holiday Homes in Jun (TD 10 Jun) and North Qld-based business Best of Magnetic back in Feb (TD 08 Feb).

Alloggio said that the latest acquisition will power its expansion into the Victorian corporate, leisure and medium-term accommodation markets, as well as enhance the company's credentials and size on the east coast of Australia.

"These latest acquisitions are consistent with Alloggio's strategy of growing holiday property management rights in regions that attract holiday makers from Australia and abroad," founder and CEO Will Creedon said.

Alloggio will fund the acquisition from existing cash reserves and available debt facilities.

Cocky climbs more

ACCESSIBLE tour operator Cocky Guides has unveiled its summer hiking schedule, which will support blind and low-vision travellers to reach the summit of Australia's highest mountain, Mount Kosciuszko.

Following a successful trip to the summit earlier this year, the upcoming schedule also includes three new departures in Jan, Feb and Mar 2023.

To find out more, call 1300 657 640 or register to the Cocky Guides online newsletter [HERE](#).

Bali 'bonk ban' back

INDONESIA appears likely to pass new laws which will make sex outside of marriage illegal - including in popular tourist destinations such as Bali.

The so-called 'bonk ban' became a hot-button issue for the Australian travel industry back in 2019, which after protests in Indonesia and abroad, ultimately led to the government backing away from the tough set of laws.

However, new proposals for the ban could be in force by as early as 15 Dec, and would see tourists face up to one year in jail if caught having sex outside of marriage, fuelling fears that it could disincentivise some Aussies from pushing ahead and planning holidays to Bali.

One possible saving grace is the likelihood that prosecution can only be brought to authorities by a limited number of parties, such as close relatives.

Indonesia relies heavily on Australia for tourism, with the country's Minister of Tourism, Sandiaga Uno, recently revealing that Indonesia has enjoyed US\$4.3 billion in tourist revenue in the first nine months of 2022.

Cruise with ATEC

THE Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) and the YATEC committees are holding an end-of-year celebration this Thu 08 Dec on board *Sydney 2000*.

You can [CLICK HERE](#) to register for the two-hour harbour cruise, which costs \$40 per person.



Window Seat

WELL, it certainly appears as though the gladiators in Rome are as ruthless as ever, only in modernity, it's cash they are after and not a bloodthirsty victory over a rabid lion.

Many tourists in the Italian capital have been caught out by a criminal sting orchestrated outside of the Colosseum by three locals, who each posed as 'Gladiators' and demanded paid selfies from unsuspecting international visitors.

Following a number of complaints made to local police by tourists who had paid as much as US\$516 for the photos made under intense intimidation, local authorities moved in quickly on the nefarious syndicate.

So extreme was the ruse, than one Irish visitor alleges that after refusing to pay, the three fake gladiators jostled him to a nearby ATM and demanded he withdraw cash.

Under Italian law, it is illegal to make tourists pay for photos, with police also suggesting the fakes can be easily spotted because they are typically dressed up as centurions and not gladiators - so make sure to watch Rusty in *Gladiator* one more time to be extra savvy before that next big Italian trip!

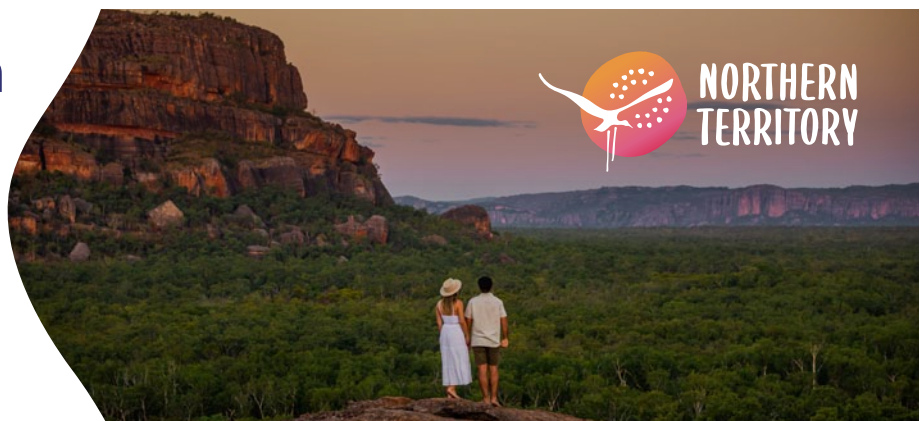
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Qantas takes off on MEL/DFW flights

QANTAS operated its first direct flight between Melbourne and Dallas/Fort Worth over the weekend, making it the first airline to offer a non-stop service between the two cities, and the longest route ever flown out of Melbourne.

The service, which will operate three-times weekly, adds more than 6,000 seats per month between Victoria and the United States, and complements Qantas' existing Melbourne-Los Angeles direct service.

With Dallas/Fort Worth located less than a four-hour flight from every major US city, Victorian travellers will be connected to over 200 destinations across North America.

Qantas' business partner American Airlines will also offer codeshare services on this flight.

Fly Atlantic debut

UP-AND-COMING airline Fly Atlantic has announced plans this week to enter the transatlantic market with low-cost flights from Belfast to the US and Canada, as well as offering short-haul European flights.

Based in Belfast in Northern Ireland, the carrier said it would look to start operating in 2024 with a small fleet of six aircraft, and plans to expand to 18 aircraft within the first four years - most likely to be Airbus A321s or the Boeing 737 Max.

We got it made in the shade



TWO personal travel managers from TravelManagers Australia recently enjoyed a luxury famil in the Maldives courtesy of hosts Club Med, Singapore Airlines and CT Partners.

Katy Hurd from Mount Eliza in Victoria and fellow Victorian Alyssa Pretorius from Warrandyte were both lucky enough to land a spot on the luxury trip, where they experienced first-hand what Club Med has to offer Australian leisure travellers.

"I had been to Club Med 11 years previously and although I loved the concept back then, it was wonderful to see for myself the many improvements and enhancements that have happened since then," Hurd said.

"In particular, The Exclusive Collection is a spectacular concept that delivers a stunning, upmarket vibe to the holiday experience," she added.

The Exclusive Collection is only available at a select number of Club Med locations, offering guests much larger spaces for

regenerative experiences, and a series of "extra thoughtful" touches designed to make travellers capable of refocusing on their own energy.

Pictured: Club Med Finolhu turns on its unique charm for members of CT Partners' Club Med Ambassador Program, including the super shady TravelManagers' Katy Hurd (fifth from left) and Alyssa Pretorius (far right).

That's entertainment

FOR all new bookings made this month, Discover Queensland customers will receive a complimentary membership to The Entertainment App.

Members of the app can access thousands of exclusive offers at cafes, restaurants and attractions while travelling around Qld.

The promo expires in three months and is part of a strategy to enable Discover Qld's parent group Leisure.com Group to offer more exclusive travel deals.

Velocity tops 11 mill

VIRGIN Australia's Velocity Frequent Flyer program has reached the membership milestone of more than 11 million members, equating to roughly one loyalty member for every Australian household.

To celebrate the achievement, VA has announced that Velocity members with a linked Flybuys account can now earn up to quadruple Status Credits when shopping at Coles, Liquorland or First Choice Liquor for the remainder of this month.

"We are laser focused on continuing to be the tailwind to get members to their status and Points goals faster and a place where members see value in their loyalty through extensive ways to earn and redeem," Velocity's CEO, Nick Rohrlach said.

Canadian savings

TRAVELLERS can save up to \$800 per couple on Entire Travel Group's Canada holiday packages if they book before 15 Dec.

The 'Canada. One of a Kind' campaign, created in partnership with Destination Canada, offers discounts ranging from \$200 to \$800 per couple on a dozen of the brand's most popular independent packages.

For example, the 11-day Lakes & Lodges self-drive itinerary is priced from \$4,913pp twin share (which includes savings of \$600 per couple), and visits Vancouver, Whistler, Jasper National Park and more - for details, [CLICK HERE](#).

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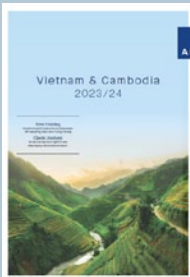
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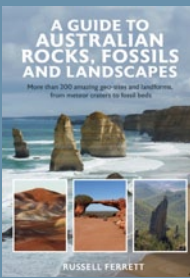


BROCHURES

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



APT - Vietnam & Cambodia 2023/24
 Adventurers are invited to explore the wonders of Vietnam and Cambodia within the pages of APT's new brochures, which highlights a range of tours and cruises in the region for 2023/24. Guests can sail along the Mekong River aboard APT's brand-new *Mekong Serenity*, with the chance to see the sun rise over Cambodia's Angkor Wat, dinner at celebrity chef Luke Nguyen's restaurant Vietnam House, and sit in on a traditional Buddhist ceremony. The brochure also includes "super deals", like earlybird savings of up to \$3,800 per couple for itineraries 21 days or longer.



A Guide to Australian Rocks, Fossils & Landscapes
 New Holland Publishers has released several new nature, adventure and travel titles, including A Guide to Australian Rocks, Fossils and Landscapes, which tells travellers where they can go to see Australia's most intriguing 'geosites'. Complemented with photos and drawings, the guide is a collection of stand-alone explanations of more than 200 different geological features, from the Great Barrier Reef and the Great Artesian Basin, to the various London Bridges of NSW, Victoria and West Australia. Each site includes information on when to visit, where to park, and more.

Murray River back

SIGHTSEEING cruises have resumed on the Murray River from the Hume Weir downstream to Echuca as of last Fri, after the New South Wales SES removed the Emergency Declaration which had been in place since 18 Oct due to flooding.

The river is expected to fall further to below minor flood levels next week with no rain forecast for some time in the upper catchment areas.

Murray River Paddlesteamers' *PS Emmylou* overnight cruises also resume today.

NSW hospo push

THE NSW Government has launched the 'Kickstart Your Career in Hospitality' campaign, a major recruitment push that aims to help ease staff shortages across the industry.

The five-week-long campaign highlights the sector's long-term career paths via a mix of video and display ads that will run across TikTok and in partnership with Pedestrian TV, with audiences directed to the nsw.gov.au/hospitalitycareer site, where they can explore courses and job vacancies.

Australia rediscovers Thailand



THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and Thai AirAsia hosted a press conference in Sydney over the weekend to mark the launch a new route connecting Sydney and Melbourne with Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi International Airport in Thailand.

AirAsia Super App members can purchase the Sydney-Bangkok

flight from \$429 per trip, while the flights from Melbourne are priced from \$439.

The carrier commenced flying direct to Sydney four times a week on Mon, Tue, Fri and Sat since 02 Dec, and commenced its direct Melbourne-Bangkok services on 01 Dec.

Pictured: The TAT and Thai AirAsia delegation in Sydney making the big launch.

Stradbroke buy

AUSTRALIAN multi-modal transport operator Transit Systems has acquired its first Queensland bus service, North Stradbroke Island Buses.

The Kelsian Group company, which operates locally as Sea-Link South East Queensland, already operates the Brisbane City Council Ferry Network, including the Stradbroke Ferries service.

According to CEO Greg Balkin, the new addition will provide the North Stradbroke Island Community with a "truly seamless transition from ferry to bus and back".

Zoo changes spots

TARONGA Western Plains Zoo has announced plans for a major \$30 million expansion which will add 55 hectares to the site featuring a giant billabong, a pool, multiple restaurants, several playgrounds, bars and eco-cabins.

The Serengeti Plains Exhibit project is currently in the tendering phase, with owners having designs on opening the new attraction by mid-2025.

"We really are bringing the best of the African experience right here to the Central West, to the Orana region," the zoo said.