



## Carnival Spirit heads to Florida

CARNIVAL Cruise Line this morning confirmed the deployment of its long-time Australian-based vessel *Carnival Spirit* on sailings out of Jacksonville, Florida.

The relocation follows almost 10 years of local operations for *Carnival Spirit*, which had been set to feature heavily in the debut season for Brisbane's brand new but currently defunct International Cruise Terminal.

Carnival said it was moving *Spirit* to Florida "due to the overwhelming success of the resumption of cruising in the US and the continued uncertainty in Australia with operations still on pause."

The company confirmed that both *Carnival Splendor* and *Carnival Spirit* are scheduled to return to Australia when cruise operations are able to resume - more in today's *Cruise Weekly*.

## "Nonsensical" border blast

AUSTRALIA'S current strict international border protocols are "no longer a viable or sensible approach to containing COVID infection," according to the Australian Tourism Export Council.

With Australia now having a higher COVID infection rate than the UK and the US, maintaining closures are simply "damaging the recovery of a range of important industries including tourism, hospitality and farming," said ATEC MD Peter Shelley.

"Given every person arriving in Australia has to be fully vaccinated and tested, there simply is no greater health risk which would result from reopening our international borders, rather it would provide a huge relief to an already burdened and struggling tourism sector," he added.

Shelley said the industry needed urgent clarity from the Government on when

international visitors will be able to return.

"Opening our borders would bring in desperately needed workers, reconnect people with their families and provide a lifeline to our tourism industry which has copped a lot over the last two years," he added.

The cruising sector has also been echoing a call for clarity, with no update forthcoming from the Government despite just two weeks now remaining before the 17 Feb deadline for the end of the biosecurity emergency ban.

A spokesperson for the Department of Health this morning wasn't able to provide any further information about a change to the 17 Feb deadline, only noting that the Govt will "continually review whether the current restrictions on cruise ships can be safely lifted or amended".

More on border policies in an opinion piece on **page four**.

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today has five pages of the latest news plus a product profile from **The Travel Junction**.

## Plenty of product!

THE Travel Junction is today being showcased in a special product profile page highlighting its easy-to-use HELIO booking platform and wide array of commissionable product including hotels, tours and transfers - see the **last page**.

## WA agent survey

TOURISM Western Australia has sent emails to the state's travel agents inviting them to complete a new survey to "assist in shaping the development of a new WA travel specialist engagement program," aiming to build relationships between Tourism WA, the retail travel industry and tourism operators.



 SILVERSEA®

THE  
SILVERSEA  
WAY

DOOR-TO-DOOR ALL-INCLUSIVE FARES WITH **15% REDUCED DEPOSIT**

AND

**NEW** PORT-TO-PORT ALL-INCLUSIVE FARES

On bookings made between 6 December 2021 through 28 February 2022. Door-to-Door All-Inclusive fares increase 1 March 2022. Port-to-Port all-inclusive fares expire 28 February 2022.

Both fare options include Silversea's Covid-19 protection, providing your clients with added peace of mind.

[CLICK HERE TO DISCOVER MORE](#)

CONTACT YOUR SILVERSEA SALES MANAGER OR RESERVATIONS ON 1300 727 155 OR +61 2 9255 0600 | [SILVERSEA.COM](http://SILVERSEA.COM)



## QF fuels up on rewards

**QANTAS** Frequent Flyer has expanded its loyalty partnership with fuel convenience retailer BP, allowing members to use points in store for eligible purchases over \$10 (1,900 points) using new reward code technology.

The new tech being piloted through the partnership sees members able to scan their digital Frequent Flyer Card via the Qantas app, with the pin pad then revealing how many points a member has to complete the purchase.

Transactions at BP stores using loyalty points will still accrue Qantas Points at the same rate as when paying via other means like cash, with up to two Qantas Points earned per litre of fuel, and one Qantas Point per \$1 spent on eligible in-store purchases.

“Our partnership with BP has quickly become one of

the top three on the ground point earning activities for our members,” Qantas Loyalty CEO, Olivia Wirth observed.

The expanded Qantas deal is very similar to one forged by rival Virgin Australia in 2016 (**TD** 20 Sep 2016), which allowed VA’s loyalty members to pay for fuel at BP’s pumps.

VA has since formed a loyalty partnership with 7-Eleven (**TD** 27 May 2021), allowing Velocity members to earn points for fuel and convenience purchases.

## Hamilton Island appoints new chief

**PETER** Brulisauer has been named the new CEO of Hamilton Island, joining the family-owned company from Vail Resorts where he was Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of its Australian operations.

Hamilton Island Chairman, Sandy Oatley, said Brulisauer was the “standout choice” for the position, and would bring with him a deep understanding of tourism operations.

“The snow community will be sad to see him go but we are grateful and excited to welcome him to our island community,” Oatley said.

The announcement comes as former Chief Executive Glenn Bourke retires from the role, a position he held at Hamilton Island for the past 14 years.



## Where’s Walley now?

**FLIGHT** Centre has announced that its senior executive Tom Walley has been promoted to take charge of its Corporate Traveller division globally.

Assuming the title of Global Managing Director for the corporate travel brand, Walley will retain his Australian responsibilities but will also head up the rebound and recovery of the division internationally.

“We already have an incredibly strong base with more than 1,500 team members globally across all sectors and we’re the dominant player in the SME travel space in Australia with over 4,000 customers, and more than 16,000 globally,” he said.

Walley added that in his new global role, the target for Corporate Traveller will be capturing US\$1 billion worth of new customers in the 2023 financial year, listing people, service and technology as the primary ingredients to achieve it.

## VA to float again?

**RUMOURS** are swirling that the owners of the de-listed Virgin Australia brand is planning to once again float on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) in either late 2022 or early 2023.

A report in *The Australian* citing company sources suggest Bain Capital is targeting a float date for when the travel sector has recovered from the jitters caused by the Omicron variant to maximise investor value.

## Shoring up aviation

**NSW** has made a play to secure the future of more international and domestic routes at airports across the state as part of its COVID Economic Recovery Plan.

Applications are now open to all domestic and international airlines to apply for grants allocated from the government’s \$60 million Aviation Attraction Fund program, which will run over two consecutive years, supporting a range of important aviation activities.

These include route subsidies and incentives to deliver extra services and passengers, strategic marketing support, and the establishment or re-establishment of cost subsidies for airlines to operate in NSW, such as office accommodation and relocation payments.

## Passports triple

**FIGURES** supplied by Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade show more than 275,000 new passports have been issued since 01 Nov 2021 - close to triple the number granted during the same period a year ago.

The data revealed by *The Guardian* today also show that Aussies are waiting 60% longer than usual for their passport applications to be processed due to the surge in demand.

“At present, processing times are on average around 16 business days, compared to within 10 business days previously,” DFAT confirmed.

**Rangelands**  
Outback Camp  
Dinosaur Country Winton

**DON'T MISS THE COCKTAILS AT SUNSET**

Experience it now under 5 stars





## Seacloud purchased

**GERMAN-BASED** Sea Cloud Cruises has been acquired by The Yacht Portfolio, with the purchase designed to further the latter's focus on the luxury small ship cruising space.

"Sea Cloud offers such a unique, environmentally friendly experience in the cruise space, which aligns well with our continued focus on building a strong portfolio of niche luxury brands," The Yacht Portfolio's CEO Douglas Prothero said.

The purchase adds to the brand's burgeoning cruise credentials, which already boasts a partnership with luxury small-ship operator The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection, part of Marriott International.

## Win US\$500 with LA

**AUSSIE** travel agents have the chance to score themselves a US\$500 e-gift card from Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board when they complete the latest LA Insider training program by 28 Feb.

Further benefits of completing the program include LA Insider certification, access to exclusive events, insider tips on LA activity, and pre-qualification to participate in destination famils.

Register to take part [HERE](#).

## Queenstown bowls them over!



**A NEW** multi-attraction entertainment experience has opened its doors in Queenstown, New Zealand, a 3,000m<sup>2</sup> space overlooking Lake Wakatipu comprised of eight separate tourism attractions and activities.

Visitors to the new Kingpin entertainment complex, created by family entertainment company TEEG, can enjoy 10-pin bowling lanes, two escape rooms, three karaoke rooms, 120 arcade games, multiple virtual reality experiences, as well as various indoor sporting activities such as table tennis, pool tables and electronic darts.

"We have invested in the latest entertainment and most advanced technology, created

a gourmet menu of delicious food and cocktails and we've worked with leading architects and builders to create a majestic environment for people to unwind, have fun and create ever-lasting memories with their friends, family and colleagues," TEEG General Manager New Zealand James Woodbridge said. "With the precinct being located only 400m from the Town Centre and Lake Wakatipu, and just 150m from the Skyline Gondola entrance, Kingpin is perfectly positioned to become a key ingredient of the Queenstown experience for...visitors."

**Pictured:** Kingpin's Sportbar.

## Bali flights sooner?

**QANTAS** has hinted it might bring services to Bali forward depending on further entry requirement details to be confirmed shortly by the Indonesian Government.

"We're excited that the Indonesian Government has announced its reopening plan for tourists and we're waiting on further details on what the specific entry and quarantine requirements will be," a spokesperson for Qantas said.

"Once we have clarity, we will provide an update if there are any changes to our Bali flights, which are currently scheduled to take off from Melbourne and Sydney in early Mar."



**WHY** should the looming threat of a military invasion put a crimp on your holiday plans?

At least that's the bizarre message from Ukraine's tourism board which is asking travellers to "keep calm" and plan a visit.

A recent statement from the eastern European nation's tourism department has attempted to reassure travellers that there was "no reason to panic", and that the "situation on the Ukrainian border remains under control".

"There is too little positive news in the information space today," a statement read, encouraging visits to the sleepless Kharkiv, fragrant Lviv, and exciting Odesa.



## Restrictions have little impact: report

**NEW** research conducted in Finland and Italy has found that recent travel restrictions imposed by European countries to mitigate the risk of the Omicron strain have been largely ineffective.

The analysis compiled by Oxera and Edge Health also suggested maintaining pre-departure testing requirements for vaccinated/recovered travellers will "have no impact whatsoever" on the future spread of the Omicron variant in Italy and Finland.

Citing the findings of the report, the International Air Transport Association urged European Governments to lift all travel restrictions for fully vaccinated/recovered individuals holding a valid COVID Certificate ASAP.

## INTRODUCING

### Travel Daily Events

Offering online events for your business - webinars, product launches, executive interviews and more, targeted to reach your desired audience.

We offer customised packages combining advertising and promotion to accompany your online event.

For more information contact us at [events@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:events@traveldaily.com.au)



## Border closures make no sense

### OPINION

Jürgen Himmelmann is the CEO of Global Work & Travel.

Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to [feedback@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:feedback@traveldaily.com.au).



THE tourism sector has been closed to international tourists for just under two years now and much of the rest of the world has been allowing overseas visitors back in. Opening the international borders to at least the fully vaccinated should be a government priority right now. And the reality is that the Omicron variant is well and truly out in the Australian community, so what's the point in keeping our borders closed? It makes no sense. The virus doesn't have a nationality, it's the same thing everywhere these days. It's time to move forward. Peak tourism bodies including the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC) along with national carrier Qantas have declared that all ongoing border restrictions in Australia must end if the tourism sector is to make a meaningful recovery

any time soon. The Gold Coast-based Global Work & Travel has international offices in London and Vancouver and is regarded as an industry leader in youth and general travel.

Other countries are opening up. In the past few days, the UK has taken all restrictions off for all countries while eliminating testing, while Norway swung open its borders for the first time since early 2020.

“  
The virus doesn't have a nationality...it's the same everywhere & it's time to move forward  
”

For example, Canada has been open to int'l tourists for six months now and, because of this, we've actually been rebooking working holiday makers who've wanted to come to Australia, and getting them over to jobs in Canada instead. Canada has been allowing working holidaymakers in for most of the pandemic, as long as they had work permits. Tourists may have initially been prevented from entering, but the working travellers turned their

attention to Canada instead. The reality is that we're competing with the likes of Canada to attract working holidaymakers to help fill the tens of thousands of unfilled jobs in Australia. They'll be instrumental in filling chronic labour shortages. In the UK, restrictions have been lifted for all incoming visitors and they won't be requiring people arriving to test. The tourism, travel and hospitality sector has been the hardest hit where it's been estimated 310,000 jobs have been lost since March 2020 as a consequence of closed borders, while farming and agriculture has also been severely affected. The key thing here is that travellers of all types want to travel with confidence and not have the potential for borders to close again or quarantine to be re-introduced. This is all too late for the many tourism and hospitality businesses that have hit the wall during the border closures, but common sense surrounding the opening of our borders will save more operations from going under, which obviously results in job losses. The damage is done, it's time to let these small business owners breathe again.

## Qantas hits back

QANTAS has flatly denied claims of price gouging alleged by Channel Nine's *A Current Affair* program last night, telling *Travel Daily* the carrier had gone to great lengths to ensure Aussies enjoy as much flexibility on their tickets as possible.

While the airline confirmed it had updated some of its terms and conditions back in Sep 2021 as borders began to stabilise, the company was being transparent with its customers about the changes and was still offering more flexibility than pre-COVID.

“Right now, if people book a flight and then choose not to go, they get a flight credit with some rules attached...this would account for less than 5% of the flight credits we are currently holding,” a spokesperson for the carrier said.

“If we cancel the flight, people have complete flexibility, including a cash refund or rebooking any type of fare, to the value of their credit.

“If there are extenuating circumstances, we encourage people to talk to us.”

Qantas added that its evolving approach to ticket refunds and the rules attached in some cases was similar to what many other major airlines have enacted.

## Winery airline offers Business class in every glass

A KIWI winery is preparing to take its business model to new heights by launching the world's first winery airline, transporting passengers from Auckland in the North Island of New Zealand to Queenstown in the South Island.

Invivo & Co's boutique carrier Invivo Air will charter a 34-seat Swedish built Saab aircraft for the maiden flight, which will take off shortly to mark Auckland's exit from a lengthy lockdown period imposed by the NZ Government.

As a gesture of goodwill, Invivo said it would be allocating a number of priority seats to Auckland hospitality and tourism

staff who have been most affected by the lockdown, as well as members of the public who haven't seen their South Island family or friends in 2021 due to ongoing restrictions.

Guests on the flight will enjoy a 24-hour line-up of special experiences planned by Invivo and partners in Queenstown, including a stay at The Hilton Queenstown and visits to Invivo's Central Otago growers.

“Running a flight to the South Island is a way that we can show the public the country is open again for domestic tourism, and at the same time support some of



those who have had a particularly tough time of it,” founder Tim Lightbourne said.

Avivo added that it was not ruling out further flights to other New Zealand or international destinations down the track.

The company has some

very high-profile admirers, with actress Sarah Jessica Parker, pictured with founders Lightbourne and Rob Cameron, and British talk show royalty Graham Norton both on board as investors and collaborators in the Kiwi winemaker.



### Accor GC campaign

**ACCOR** has launched a new campaign to attract more families to its properties on the Gold Coast, showcasing the region's broad range of experiences that would appeal to travellers "irrespective of their age, cultural background or budget".

The Something for ALL marketing push will run on multiple digital channels, including SBS on-demand platforms to reach more culturally diverse demographics.

### Tassie tourism sesh

**TOURISM** Tasmania will host a webinar on 09 Feb at 10.30am, where Industry Manager Sam Denmead will provide a sneak peek at the state's new off season marketing campaign.

Attendees will also receive tips on how to participate in Tasmania's Off Season program, be shown how to access important tourism resources, and be given a demonstration about how to upload their own offers.

**CLICK HERE** to register.

## 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](mailto:accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au).



TFE Hotels has announced the completed refurbishment of the **Adina Apartment Hotel Chippendale** following a multimillion dollar facelift. Upgrades have seen the lobby, restaurant and the property's 320 hotel rooms transformed to reflect both its history and newer elements. A spokesperson for the hotel said the refurbishment was to make guests feel part of the history with all of the mod cons they have come to expect.



Baillie Lodges has revealed a sleek new look for its **Silky Oaks Lodge** property located in the leafy canopy of the Daintree Rainforest following a \$20 million refurbishment. The luxury eco resort has emerged with a fresh, contemporary style featuring soaring ceilings, slow-turning fans and larger open-air spaces designed to welcome in the sights and sounds of the rainforest. Guests can now also tune into Baillie Lodges' new *Luxury Redefined* podcast before arriving for check-in.



The **Aiden Darling Harbour** has opened its doors to the public this week, with the compact 88-room property offering guests homely furnishings and extra comfortable bedding from Sleepmaker. On the ground floor lobby, guests can enjoy the Wayfarer's Bar & Cafe, serving up croissants from Pymont's PiOIK Bakery, as well as an all-Australian wine list.

**ALTHOUGH** the water buffalo also known as the carabao is often considered this nation's national animal, the monkey-eating eagle (also known as the country's name eagle) is officially the national bird.

This eagle is endemic to the forests of this nation and is

considered the largest in terms of length and wing surface.

Killing one of these birds is punishable under this nation's law with 12 years in prison and heavy fines.

Do you know which Asian nation this country is the national animal of?

Answer: Philippine eagle - Philippines

### Heritage Kiwi trips

**TWO** new voyages exploring the coastlines of New Zealand in late 2022 and early 2023 have been unveiled by Heritage Expeditions.

The new sailings include the 11-day New Zealand Coastal Odyssey: The Ultimate Expedition Cruise of the New Zealand Coast itinerary, scheduled to depart Auckland on 14 Nov.

Highlights of the voyage include visits to Rotorua, Dunedin, Queenstown and Stewart Island.

Meanwhile the 15-day Best of New Zealand: An Intimate Exploration Cruise of New Zealand's Islands option takes passengers to the capital Wellington, before exploring Napier and the best conservation spots on the North Island.

The sailing departs 06 Mar 2023 and will be undertaken by the 140-guest *Heritage Adventurer*.

Guest aboard the vessel will enjoy access to 14 Zodiacs for more in-depth expedition experiences, as well as all-suite cabins with private facilities.

### Key routes to resume

**SOUTH** African Airways has confirmed it will commence flying three times a day to Durban from Johannesburg in Mar due to "overwhelming passenger demand", with special Durban fare deals for its Voyager program members to launch shortly.

The carrier also revealed it will resume twice daily services from South Africa to Mauritius from 01 Mar, after the route was suspended late last year following COVID concerns.

### NCL big discounts

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line (NCL) is offering Australian and New Zealand cruisers savings of up to 35% on voyages departing in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

The promo is available until 15 Feb and also includes US\$200 of onboard credit on a wide range of sailings across Europe, Hawaii, Alaska, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and more.

For more details, **CLICK HERE**.



# Access unrivalled product

Whether you're a travel agent working for a global brand, an individual servicing a handful of loyal customers, or managing a team of agents, The Travel Junction will provide extra value for your clients and help you earn more commission.

Through The Travel Junction (TTJ), travel agents across the industry can access HELiO, our easy-to-use booking platform. By adding unbeatable breadth, depth and availability to your product offering, you can maximise your commission and profit.

By partnering with TTJ, you access:

- Hotels – 250,000 hotels in over 1,000 countries, backed by incredible room allotment, multiple rate types, and 'last room availability'
- Tours – 30,000 of the best

attractions and experience operators in the world

- Transfers – Over 60 transfer providers globally
- Car hire – TTJ works with suppliers in 24,000 locations in over 140 countries worldwide

Plus, a partnership with TTJ offers so much more than travel product, including:

- Trade Only – All our efforts to support travel recovery is channelled through our trade partners. We don't sell direct to consumers, and we don't collect or retain your client's contact details
- Regular updates and information – Keep your finger on the pulse of the travel industry and get ongoing updates on new deals and destinations

- Attend trade events – Keep ahead of the best promotions and offers, and network with fellow agents
- Global support – 24/7 access to TTJ's support hubs for your customers across the globe

**EARN UP TO 15%  
COMMISSION IN  
ALL HOTEL DESTINA-  
TIONS THROUGH TTJ**

Includes Australia, USA, Thailand, Fiji and Bali.  
Promotion ends Fri 4 Mar.  
Start booking before it's too late! Register [HERE](#).