

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news plus a full page from Japan National Tourist Office.

Snow & adventure

TOURISM Australia's Aussie Specialist virtual training webinar focusing on snow and adventure travel in Australia will take place on 03 Mar at 11am AEDT.

Attendees can learn about mountain bike adventures, horseback riding and more, with two \$100 Zorali vouchers on offer to win - register [HERE](#) to attend.

Bali chooses Hyatt

THE Indonesian Government has appointed Grand Hyatt Bali to be one of its "bubble quarantine hotels" in preparation for a resumption in travel.

The Warm Up Vacations initiative offers travellers four nights of accommodation, daily breakfast, lunch and dinner, two PCR tests, five pieces of laundry daily, one-way airport transfer, completed facilities and activities.

AFTA widens grant net

EXCLUSIVE

FURTHER details of the pre-Budget submission from the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) have emerged, with the organisation urging wider eligibility for any payments under its proposed \$190 million *Travel Sector Skills Retention and Impaired Recovery Package*.

AFTA's submission (**TD** 01 Feb) suggests the total could be partly offset from the \$66 million underspend from the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program (CTSP), and also proposes changes to the criteria including removing requirements that JobKeeper had to be received, or that to be eligible a travel business had to have successfully applied for funding under the CTSP.

The submission urges that businesses which commenced operation between Oct 2019 and Mar 2020 would also be eligible for support, and that any AFTA/ATAS member would automatically comply with requirements - noting that previously some AFTA members

were excluded on the basis that they were not considered to be travel agent businesses.

An "operational test" based on current Business Activity Statement returns would be applied under AFTA's plan, and the Federation is recommending that the eligibility turnover limit be increased from the previous \$20 million to \$150 million in TTV in acknowledgement that "medium to large businesses have higher overheads and employee costs, and continue to carry these costs as well as the bulk of Australian consumers' travel credits".

AFTA's proposed package would also include a second round of the multi-outlet scheme which would give \$10,000 per eligible location for businesses operating several offices under one ABN.

In addition, the budget proposal suggests the implementation of a travel industry JobStarter package which would provide travel businesses with \$10,000 per new or re-engaged employee.

The JobStarter plan would be available to businesses which are still at least 50% down on 2019 turnover, and re-engaged staff would be required to have not worked in the travel industry for at least three months.

AFTA's submission was made in the lead-up to the Federal Budget which will be handed down by the Government on Tue 29 Mar.

Visit USA session

VISIT USA is holding a hybrid virtual and in-person event on 02 Mar at 4pm in Sydney, with the update hosted by celebrity Richard Reid to provide a detailed update on the key US market. See **page four** for more details.

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Scenic hit by cyber attack

EXCLUSIVE

SCENIC Group has confirmed that it has been the victim of a “cyber security incident,” which has seen unauthorised access to the company’s IT systems.

All websites across the Scenic Luxury Cruises & Tours, Emerald Cruises and Evergreen Tours brands are offline while an investigation takes place, while Chief Operating Officer Rob Voss said an external cyber security company had been engaged to

help resolve the situation.

Voss said Scenic was committed to working with relevant authorities and complying with privacy laws and reporting obligations as required.

“Once the dedicated incident response team is satisfied that the threat has been mitigated, our priority will be to re-establish the service levels for our guests and partners,” Voss added.

He noted that currently there was no access to Scenic’s Expressbook or Trip Personaliser tools, warning that there would be delays in responding to any enquiries - although all cruise and tour programs are continuing to operate as scheduled.

“Scenic Group will work closely with our partners to ensure delivery of our guest experience is not impacted,” Voss said.

While systems are down agents are advised to call 138 128 or email travelagentssupport@scenic.com.au, with the company also confirming it had turned off the automatic cancellation feature if payments are not received on time.

Agents are being told “at this stage there is no need to inform or alert your clients,” with no evidence so far to indicate that any guest, staff data or personal information has been impacted by the attack.

Scenic sent out the update this morning, but it’s understood that systems have been offline since as early as Wed last week.

Virgin Voyages plots Aussie cruises

VIRGIN Voyages has announced its third vessel, *Resilient Lady*, will “make her way down to Australia” between Oct and Dec 2023.

The fledgling cruise line has opened bookings for three sectors on a repositioning voyage from Athens to Sydney, but has not provided any further information about local itineraries once *Resilient Lady* arrives.

Current offers for Virgin Voyages, including on the repositioning, are a 22% agent commission and a 20% discount plus a US\$100 prepaid bar tab - more details at firstmates.com.

Nicko cruises GSA

GERMAN cruise line Nicko Cruises has appointed Cruise Traveller to be its exclusive General Sales Agent in Australia.

The line operates 26 river and coastal ships, mostly in Europe, along with two ocean ships, the 200-guest *World Voyager* and the 1000-guest *Vasco da Gama*.

To mark the new relationship, Cruise Traveller has launched a river and ocean double cruise package through the south of France and the Mediterranean in 2023, offering savings of up to \$2,950 per couple.

Deal is valid for bookings made by 31 Aug - call 1800 507 777.

WA support open

WESTERN Australia’s Minister for Tourism, Roger Cook, has opened applications for the recently announced tourism industry support packages (**TD 11** Feb) which aim to “offset some of the financial impact incurred by the delayed border opening”.

Up to \$50,000 per business is available for operators who have refunded deposits on cancelled interstate or international bookings, while one-off payments of up to \$20,000 are available to offset expenses incurred by tourism businesses in preparation for the originally scheduled 05 Feb border opening.

Applications will also shortly open for the \$3 million WA Travel Agents Support Fund, which will give home-based agents up to \$10,000, while eligible bricks-and-mortar businesses can secure a one-off \$20,000 payment - see tourism.wa.gov.au.

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Japan eases rules

TOMORROW it will become easier for vaccinated Australians to visit Japan without quarantine, but a visa is still required, with the pre-COVID 90-day tourist visa on arrival currently suspended.

Effective from 01 Mar 2022 non-Japanese nationals newly entering the country for purposes including business or employment may enter the country - but at this stage the easing of restrictions does not apply to tourists or VFR travellers.

Entry caps into Japan will increase to 5,000 passengers per day from tomorrow, and approved arrivals who are triple vaccinated with approved vaccines are no longer required to undertake home quarantine.

Visitors who are not triple vaccinated must do a seven-day home or hotel quarantine, but if they test negative for COVID-19 on the third day they may be able to exit quarantine early.

CLIA LIVE returns for 22

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) is bringing back its CLIA LIVE education series this year, unveiling the details for an initial rollout of two-day events to be held across four cities.

The sessions offer agents the chance to hear from representatives across ocean, river and expedition cruising, with seminars tailored to cater to both new-to-cruise advisors, as well as more experienced sellers.

The theme of CLIA LIVE 2022 will be "What's New?", with cruise lines outlining recent on-board innovations, as well as new health and safety requirements.

CLIA Australasia Director of Membership & Events Marita Nasic said past CLIA LIVE events were among the most popular in the CLIA education program.

"CLIA LIVE gives travel agent members an opportunity to learn about multiple cruise lines in the one place at the one time,

allowing them to gain the latest product insight across the entire cruise spectrum," she said.

Events will take place in Melbourne on 27-28 Apr, Adelaide on 11-12 May, Brisbane on 24-25 May and Sydney on 01-02 Jun, with Perth and Auckland to be added later in the year.

Tickets will cost CLIA members \$50+GST per day, earning 30 accreditation points for each day of attendance - more info [HERE](#).

Air NZ ramps up

ALMOST 250 days since the travel bubble paused, Air New Zealand will be bringing a number of its country's citizens and permanent residents home from Australia on five flights.

Air New Zealand has services arriving from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and Perth, with the first flight arriving into Auckland from SYD at 5:15pm local time.



Window Seat

THE Winter Olympics is typically a major tourism boon for the host nation, but sometimes there are graphic stories about competitors that visitors would do well to ignore.

One such example is the plight of Finland's Remi Lindholm, whose penis needed to be thawed out by a heat pack after he competed in the men's 50km cross-country ski race.

An hour and 16 minutes in freezing conditions, Lindholm admitted he no feeling left in his crotch area after the race, however, the uncomfortable nature of his injury was just the beginning of his ordeal.

"When the body part started to warm up after the finish, the pain was unbearable," the sore Olympian grizzled.

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Travel Daily

Monday 28th February 2022



Journey Beyond found itself with a new owner last month. Going forward will they be on a new track? Read more in the February issue of *travelBulletin*.

travelBulletin

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Aeroflot out in cold

THE commercial consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues to deepen for the country's carrier Aeroflot, with a number of European Union members announcing plans to close airspace to the airline.

Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Finland, Malta, Poland, Romania, Spain, Belgium, Luxembourg, Sweden, Iceland and Denmark have all indicated that Russian airlines will be blocked, while Russia has returned serve by closing its own airspace to all countries that have announced bans.

MEANWHILE Delta Air Lines has withdrawn its codeshare services operated in with Aeroflot, effective immediately.

The US airline added it has removed its code from Aeroflot-operated services from Los Angeles and New York-JFK.

Time to deliver some magic



EXPERIENCE Co's new \$7 million tourism pontoon in Cairns has celebrated its completion via an event attended by executives and senior Qld politicians.

The Reef Magic pontoon will be operational from mid-Mar and offers visitors indigenous- and sustainability-themed on-water adventures which include guided snorkelling and helmet diving, available using an underwater platform that loops around the pontoon.

"We have worked closely with traditional owner groups and their respective land and

Sea Country guides, which has enabled us to incorporate culture and Indigenous ecological knowledge into our interpretation, education research and site stewardship actions," Experience Co CEO John O'Sullivan said.

Pictured: John O'Sullivan, CEO at Experience Co.; Ken Chapman, Chair at TTNQ; Michael Healy, Assistant Minister Tourism, Innovation and Sport; Stirling Hinchliffe, Minister for Tourism and Sport; Adam Jones, Great Barrier, Experience Co.; and Mark Olsen, CEO at TTNQ.

Safety in travel

SAFE-XPLORE has launched, a new application enabling travellers to make confident decisions with a personalised risk rating while planning trips.

The free app incorporates age and gender-specific data mapped for almost 400 cities around the world, and thousands of sub-national regions.

Safe-xplore makes information available in an easy-to-use format, providing relevant, hyper-local risk data, along with critical safety alerts, tips, and best practices to promote improved safety awareness, resiliency, and wellness.

The app leverages big data analytics, proprietary algorithms, and interface design, based on current cognitive-behavioral research, to measure and communicate personal risks more effectively.

Users get real-time access to the metrics anywhere in the world.

VISIT USA
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Hybrid Event 2022
Wednesday 2 March
4:00pm to 7:00pm
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SWISS unveils Premium

SWISS has unveiled its first aircraft to be equipped with the airline's new Premium Economy class at Zurich Airport, a new offering designed to provide passengers with greater privacy and in-flight comfort.

Set to be gradually installed on all 12 of the carrier's Boeing 777-300ER long-haul aircraft, the new premium seating option features a newly-developed seat with a hardshell design that enables an easy recline at no inconvenience to the passengers behind.

Premium Economy Class travellers will also be given a complimentary amenity kit, noise-reducing headphones, 15.6-inch at-seat entertainment screens, and a welcome drink on arrival along with three meals.

SWISS Premium Economy travellers can check in two pieces of baggage of up to 23



kilos each - twice the normal baggage allowance for Economy Class passengers, as well as gain discounted access to the SWISS Business Lounges at Zurich and Geneva airports and to Zurich Airport's SWISS Arrival Lounge.

"Our Premium Economy Class should be especially appealing to travellers who have flown Economy Class to date and would like to enhance their in-flight comfort and convenience," SWISS Chief Commercial Officer Tamur Goudarzi Pour said.

Little Collins, big dreams



HOLIDAY Inn Express Melbourne Little Collins has thrown open its doors today.

Part of the IHG Hotels & Resorts family, Holiday Inn Express Little Collins has opened in partnership with Pro-invest Hotels, and is located on one of Melbourne's most iconic laneways.

Offering incredible value without compromising on quality, each of the 312 modern guestrooms have been designed to offer a seamless and

comfortable stay, and feature special touches, such as a study nook, speedy wi-fi, and more.

To celebrate the official launch of Holiday Inn Express Little Collins, the property is offering rates starting from \$175 per room per night valid for bookings from now until 27 Apr, for stays from until 27 Apr.

Holiday Inn Express Little Collins is on track to achieve Green Engage Level 1 Certification - Partner status, and is committed to reducing plastic, with Zip Taps located through-out the hotel.

Sun shines on Japan

DESTINATION Gold Coast, in partnership with Tourism and Events Queensland, has introduced a pop-up activation inside the 1,000-room Sheraton Grande Tokyo Bay Hotel until the end of Mar.

It is expected that up to 150,000 Japanese guests will experience the Gold Coast-themed lobby and an exclusive menu onsite at the hotel's Grand Cafe, with the installations designed to provide a flavour of the Gold Coast's beaches and rainforests.

"Pre-COVID, the Gold Coast welcomed 75,000 Japanese visitors and this market was growing in size and as Australia's borders reopen, our strategic approach internationally is focused on conversion-based activity with travel trade and aviation partners to support the return of these visitors with a focus on our Asian markets leading the pack for international tourism recovery," Destination Gold Coast CEO Patricia O'Callaghan said.

The experiential campaign is the latest phase of the Gold Coast's six-week marketing push to keep the tropical destination top-of-mind for tourists.

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Applications close 11 March 2022. Only successful candidates will be contacted. No agencies.

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EY grows initiative

ETIHAD Airways has launched the Etihad Mangrove Forest in collaboration with Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi.

Part of the Abu Dhabi Mangrove Programme, Etihad Mangrove Forest will be the first planting program to establish carbon-absorbing forests in every country the airline operates.

Passengers, corporate accounts and partners are now able to adopt mangroves in Abu Dhabi to reduce their carbon footprint for \$7.

Visit Maldives series

VISIT Maldives has launched Experiences Live from Maldives, a series of live experiences from the country to encourage Australians to visit.

To be streamed in a series of 10 episodes on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#), and shared via Visit Maldives' social media channels, Experiences Live from Maldives will deliver unique experiences of the country's colours, flavours and scenic beauty.

The series also aims to reassure Aussies of the Maldives' safety.

Packages made on the run



THE Explorer Society has been named as the official Asia-Pacific partner for the Sanlam Cape Town Marathon (pictured).

The 42.2km long-distance race will be hosted on 16 Oct, and is open to a range of running enthusiasts, from elite athletes to social runners.

The Explorer Society will offer exclusive travel packages which include guaranteed entry.

International participants in the Cape Town Marathon over the next three years will also receive entry to the 2025 event, when it becomes one of the Abbott World

Marathon Majors, joining Berlin, Boston, Chicago, New York City, and Tokyo.

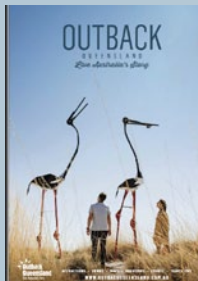
There is a choice of a comprehensive three- or four-night Cape Town package staying at The Table Bay Hotel, starting from only \$1,700 per person.

Post-race extensions include a relaxation at Grootbos Private Nature Reserve, and a three-night fly-in package to private game reserve Sabi Sabi.

This year's Cape Town Marathon will feature a new and improved route, passing by iconic sites and breathtaking vistas.

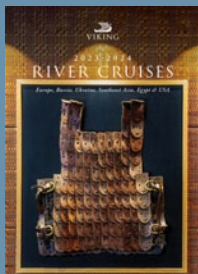
BROCHURES

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.



Outback Queensland - 2022 Travellers Guide

From dinosaur discoveries to luxury stays, the new Outback Queensland Travellers Guide unveils 22 must-do experiences in the region in 2022. From rich cultural experiences and adventurous trails to a bird-watching oasis following the La Nina downpour, the 117-page Travellers Guide boasts brand new, never-before-seen attractions & events, QR code itineraries and exclusive insights to kick off their 2022 tourism season. Spanning almost 1,000,000km², Outback Queensland boasts one of the world's largest rodeos, epic fishing tours, jam-packed adventures off the beaten track, outdoor cinematic experiences, luxurious glamping retreats and more.



Viking - 2023-2024 River Cruises

Viking's 2023-2024 River Cruises brochure features new destinations, new itineraries, and new experiences in its more than 240 pages. From Central Europe to Egypt, Asia and the United States, the brochure features five new European river cruise itineraries, including a 17-day Eastern European cruise and four new sailings that take in the continent's festive season magic. Sailing from Mar, the 17-day Capitals of Eastern Europe cruise includes 14 nights sailing the Lower Danube from Vienna to Constanta on the Black Sea, before a two-night Bucharest hotel stay.

Travel Daily Events

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AN EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

with publisher Bruce Piper and Entire Travel Group directors Brad McDonnell and Greg McCallum



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