

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has four pages of news plus full pages from Entire Travel Group and Oceania Cruises.

FJ ready for Qld

IN SOME long-awaited news for Queenslanders, residents can now take a holiday to Fiji with news that Fiji Airways will resume flights from Brisbane from 23 Jan, operating five weekly flights to Nadi until Mar, at which time flights will run daily.

Thailand back on

THAI authorities have confirmed its quarantine-free travel scheme will resume from 01 Feb after being suspended by rising cases of Omicron.

Fully vaccinated travellers can enter the country will need to return negative COVID tests on day one and five of their arrival, with tourists needing to isolate in a hotel while awaiting the results.

WA closure rocks industry

A DECISION by WA Premier Mark McGowan to backflip on a plan to open the state up to travel could throw the national carrier's plan to resume Perth-London flights into turmoil.

He made the call last night, with Qantas confirming that "at the moment we are reviewing and will make some changes to the schedule" as a result.

Currently the hard WA border has meant Qantas' non-stop flights from Australia to the UK operate via Darwin, but schedules

had previously indicated a planned return to PER from 27 Mar.

The indefinite WA closure, announced just three weeks before the planned reopening, could also impact QF's plans to operate non-stop from Australia to Rome, with the route currently set to launch via PER on 22 Jun.

There's no timeframe for any easing of WA restrictions at this stage, with the Premier suggesting reopening may not happen until 80-90% of the state's population has had a third COVID-19 vaccination.

Currently the WA third dose rate for 18+ citizens is about 25%.

CLIA backs action

NEXT Tue's national travel industry Day of Action (TD yesterday) is being supported by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) which has released new flyers and updates for participants to give to MPs and locals - for info on how to join the fight [CLICK HERE](#).

Oceania specials

OCEANIA Cruises is offering upfront bonus commission, onboard credits and more as part of an Australia Day sale, valid for bookings confirmed by 01 Feb - for more details see the [last page](#).

Travel Daily

on location in
Punta Arenas, Chile

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Aurora Expeditions aboard the *Greg Mortimer* in South America.

TRAVEL Daily has been invited by Aurora Expeditions on one of the first of its "Antarctic Explorer" itineraries since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Passengers arrived in Punta Arenas in Chilean Patagonia this week, where they stayed overnight at Hotel Dreams del Estrecho.

They boarded *Greg Mortimer* yesterday, on just her second voyage of the season, with the ship then starting to head south towards Antarctica via the Strait of Magellan, which separates mainland Chile from Tierra del Fuego.



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Window Seat

WITH so many overseas cities to visit in 2022, it's probably an important juncture to learn more about their history.

For example, has anyone ever considered how cities earn their nicknames? Well jursinn.com recently compiled a list that will guide you through the past, for example did you know that New York became known as 'The Big Apple' in the 1920s after sports reporter John FitzGerald began using the phrase in his horse racing columns after hearing stable hands refer to the city's racetracks as the 'big apples'?

Those travelling to Tijuana, referred to as the 'Television Capital of the World', might also be interested to know that it earned its name in the 1980s due to the volume of television manufacturing in the city, and to this day it still produces over 19 million TVs each year.

Toronto is known as 'The Queen City' because of the ubiquity of places named after Queen Victoria, who inspired the naming of Queen's Park, Victoria College and several of its major thoroughfares.

In Madagascar, the capital Antananarivo's nickname is the 'City of Thousands', referred to because of the thousands of soldiers who guarded the city in the 17th century.

Journey Beyond 2023 launch

JOURNEY Beyond is expecting to cater for more than two million guests this year, with the company confirming the current season is almost sold out as it opens reservations for an even bigger 2023 season.

Next year's offering will also provide more opportunities for the travel industry, with newly commissionable product added as part of a major expansion in capacity across the business.

The company has produced a new showcase video highlighting its array of brands across the country, including Journey Beyond Rail, Sal Salis Ningaloo Reef, Cruise Whitsundays,

Horizontal Falls Seaplane Adventures, Darwin Harbour Cruises, Journey Beyond Cruise Sydney, Rottnest Express and the new Melbourne Skydeck.

The capacity growth will see Journey Beyond Rail trains return in 2023 with extended seasons, including double Ghan departures running from Apr-Sep, an additional month for the Great Southern in Feb next year, and additional carriages on selected Indian Pacific departures.

Journey Beyond has also confirmed a major expansion of its Outback Spirit touring product, with the Red Centre Spectacular and Ultimate Territory tours to double capacity next year.

Outback Spirit is the only tour company with permission to travel through the heart of Arnhem Land, the video notes. "We've been working hard behind the scenes to bring this wonderful experience to even more guests, and so we're excited to announce that Outback Spirit tours will now be commissionable to all agents," the company said.

The rollout of the 2023 program comes as Journey Beyond's current owner, Quadrant Private Equity, last week confirmed the \$600m sale of the business to San Francisco-based Hornblower Group (**TD** 13 Jan).

Travel advisors can upskill on the full Journey Beyond range via the company's Experience Hub, with the full video now online at traveldaily.com.au/videos.

Insurance purchase

AUSTRALIAN travel insurer InsureandGo has been purchased by Generali Group subsidiary Europ Assistance (EA), precipitating a rebrand of the business to Europ Assistance Australia and the expected launch of a new B2B insurance product.

The acquisition, which is still subject to regulatory approval, will see EA attempt to leverage InsureandGo's status as a leader in the local travel insurance market to build new partnerships and expand in the Asia Pacific.

EA said that Australia represented a key market for travel insurance, predicting that when volumes return to pre-pandemic levels the purchase would fuel sustainable growth.

The acquisition is not expected to impact the Australian operations of InsureandGo.

EA has a presence in more than 200 countries, boasting a network of more than 750,000 assistance providers and averaging around 10 million assistance interventions every year.

MIQ suspended

IN A blow to Kiwis in Australia looking to travel home, the NZ Govt has announced the temporary suspension of the return of citizens and visa holders from abroad amid Omicron variant concerns.

Overseas citizens & visa holders with existing Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) bookings will not be affected by the move.

IHG loyalty revamp

INTERCONTINENTAL Hotels Group has announced a revised IHG Rewards Program, including the introduction of a new Gold Elite tier which will be available to guests who stay 20 or more nights at the group's hotels.

IHG Rewards will rename its top tier (Spire Elite) as Diamond Elite, while other high tiers will have improved bonus point accruals.

CEO Keith Barr said the changes aimed to address the evolution of the market, with the revamped program to roll out from Mar.

He said the update was "just the start as we prepare to fully relaunch a truly transformed program later this year," with stays from 01 Jan 2022 counting towards the new scheme.

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CORPORATE UPDATE

EY stays loyal to the planet

ETIHAD Airways has unveiled a dedicated rewards program with a strong focus on sustainability for corporate travellers.

Corporate Conscious Choices is designed to aid companies in reducing carbon emissions, with the new program offering corporate clients the opportunity to offset travel, invest in Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) & promote sustainable activities.

The crux of the program will see corporates able to bulk buy SAF with Etihad, as well as elect to have a “green surcharge” added to each corporate travel flight ticket, which is then invested in offset solutions such as mangrove planting, re-forestation or community projects in Africa.

Other aspects of the green initiative include the accrual of corporate conscious miles, meaning when business travellers fly with Etihad and earn Guest Miles, they will also earn miles for their organisation as well, which can then be used to offset corporate travel or purchase sustainable products from the Etihad Guest Reward Shop.

“Sustainability has been at the top of Etihad’s agenda as the most significant long-term priority of our business for a long time now but it is more than just a business priority,” Etihad’s Group Chief Executive Officer Tony Douglas said.

“It’s a social responsibility, as the influence organisations have on society as leaders, helping consumers make sustainable choices in their everyday lives, is a duty and obligation of doing business.

“We have put a lot of focus on what governments and regulators should be doing to battle climate change, but the fact is we need corporates’ help and there is an equal responsibility for corporates to do what they can to reduce their own carbon footprint, while leading by example to help consumers to live more sustainably.”

Founding clients include global travel management firm CWT and multinational professional services company Accenture.

EY first unveiled a green loyalty program in Dec (TD 09 Dec 2021).

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APT branding a smash hit!



APT recently hosted guests at Melbourne Park to celebrate the company’s ninth year as a broadcast sponsor of the Australian Open tennis tournament.

Joining Australian Pacific Holdings’ Simon Jones and APT’s Scott Ellis and David Cox were a real pair of aces, with Pete Williams from Phil Hoffmann Travel and Brett Dann from Hunter Travel Group taking in the view courtside.

APT has been serving up some

major heat via its latest Resume Play campaign, which has seen APT’s advertising with the tournament helping to position the company as an international operator following a strong domestic focus over the last couple of years.

Pictured: Pete Williams, Simon Jones, Scott Ellis, David Cox, and Brett Dann relish live sport again.

We can see the sunshine again!

THE lifting of travel restrictions to Queensland will provide “real confidence” in the corporate world, Flight Centre Managing Director Australia James Kavanagh believes.

“The removal of these requirements will also enable businesses to conduct day trips more easily and with certainty, without the worry of finding somewhere to get tested, or clock-watching for the results to come through before travelling,” Kavanagh said.

“There could be some bumps in the road as the corporate world adjusts to a ‘new normal’ but what we do know is businesses big and small need to travel to survive and thrive and it’s never been more vital to have a travel management company on your side to help navigate rules and regulations,” he added.

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Green shoots for 2022

TRAVEL spending intentions increased by 28.1% during Dec when compared to the previous month, new figures from CommBank reveals.

Driving the upturn were factors such as the reopening of most state borders and a general spike in summer holiday spend, however the numbers were still well down on the same period in 2019 prior to the pandemic.

Encouragingly, the travel spending index for Dec has risen by 126.1% since the low point of Delta lockdown in Aug, with hotels, motels and resorts, travel agents, tourist attractions, and trailer parks all seeing solid increases, however airline spending remained weak.

Regional road trips were one of the more popular holiday options, the report noted, with an increase in spend observed on petrol and less on air tickets.

Looking ahead, nine in 10 Australians are planning on taking a leisure trip within the next six months, Expedia's *2022 Travel Industry Outlook Report* suggests.

The dominant holiday type, according to the 500 Aussies surveyed, are shorter trips taken more often, with local regional travel still the most popular plan for early 2022.

Car trips were at the top of the list for 73% of Australians, citing a need for more personal and private modes of travel.

But it wasn't all bad news for the aviation industry, with 65% of respondents stating they planned to board a plane in 2022, with 40% suggesting they are "likely" or have "already booked" to fly to an international destination in the next six months.

Flexible fare options and cheaper prices were the most important booking factors.

TRAVEL SPECIALS

WELCOME to Travel Specials, *Travel Daily's* Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of, send the details to specials@traveldaily.com.au

Hurtigruten Expeditions has released its Antarctica all-inclusive with flights offer for 2022/23 sailings, with prices leading in from \$11,990 per person, twin-share, along with up to \$450 onboard credit per cabin. The offer includes return international flights from Australia and New Zealand, and bookings must be made by 28 Feb. [CLICK HERE](#) for details.

Royal Caribbean's Long Weekend Sale has kicked off, with bookings made between 16-20 Jan earning guests a free balcony stateroom upgrade, 30% off for each guest and up to US\$600 of onboard credit per stateroom. Call 1800 754 500 for more details.

Savings of \$2,230 per couple are on offer for the **Finniss River Lodge** in the NT through The Tailor, with prices leading in at \$4,715pp. The deal is valid until 31 Mar for travel between 01 Apr & 30 Jun. See info [HERE](#).

BARBARA Gross (pictured) from Sabra Travel in Bondi is preparing to don her best dancing shoes as she gears up to raise money for the Cancer Council's Stars Dance for Cancer initiative.

Having lost both of her parents to cancer, the cause is very close to Gross' heart, explaining a willingness to boogie out of her comfort zone was worth it if it means providing funds for important research, prevention, advocacy and support for people suffering from the disease.

"I think Cancer Council do an unbelievable job, in fact for

my recent last big birthday I had requested no presents but donation to Cancer Council instead," Gross said.

Describing her primary dance style as "a bit of rhythm", Gross said that in her teens she used to dance quite a bit but never pursued it professionally, and now is her big chance to show the world how to cut a rug with the best of them.

In the world of travel, Gross has been lucky enough to visit almost 100 countries during her 35 years in the industry, but perhaps none will be as important as her next big trip for cancer awareness.

People can donate to the Gross' dancing efforts [HERE](#).

QF bold roster bid

QANTAS International has sought permission from the Fair Work Commission to terminate its Long Haul Cabin Crew agreement in a bid to overturn what the carrier describes as "restrictive and outdated rostering processes".

The decision follows a protracted negotiation with the Flight Attendants' Association of Australia for a new enterprise agreement, which was ultimately rejected by 97% of cabin crew.

While Qantas said the request would not lead to any job cuts, the Australian Council of Trade Unions believes a new Qantas-led agreement could see staff wages slashed by up to 50%.

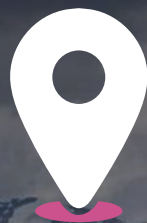
SYD CEO downbeat

SYDNEY Airport's chief believes the travel outlook is bleak so long as Omicron continues to spread throughout the community.

Geoff Culbert said travellers' confidence remains dented and the lack of certainty was a major factor in much fewer passengers passing through the gates of Australia's largest air hub.

"The big question is what happens after that, will there be another strain? How severe will it be? When will restrictions be lifted? No one has the answers right now," Culbert told News Limited media this morning.

Got a confidential tip? Contact *Travel Daily* via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click [HERE](#) 



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