



### Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news plus a full page from Fiji Airways.

### Collette adds 29

COLLETTE has introduced 29 new 'Explorations' tours, expanding its overall small group offering to 44 different itineraries.

President and Chief Brand Officer, Jaclyn Leibl-Cote, said the expansion made small group travel the fastest growing and largest of all of Collette's various tour offerings.

"Many travellers want to meet local people and experience their cultures and ways of life...small groups make that possible," Leibl-Cote said.

The trips are conducted in groups of 14-24, with hands-on activities and experiences in four-star or better accommodation that reflects local culture.

## US pre-testing impediment

AMERICA'S continued insistence on pre-travel COVID-19 testing for international inbound visitors arriving by air is threatening the recovery of the country's tourism industry, with the issue a major lobbying focus for the sector in Washington DC.

Speaking at the 53rd annual IPW trade show in Orlando today, outgoing US Travel Association (USTA) President Roger Dow described the inbound testing measure as an "illogical, unnecessary hurdle".

"Many countries have eliminated testing...we have to follow very quickly," he said, adding that the measure was a "tremendous deterrent to travel".

He cited recent USTA research of vaccinated international travellers in six key markets in which more than half of all respondents said the added

uncertainty had "caused them to cancel a trip or have a negative impact, while 71% of those surveyed said they prioritised travel to destinations without cumbersome requirements".

Recent efforts have included a letter to the White House signed by more than 260 key travel and tourism suppliers urging the lifting of the testing measure (TD 03 Jun), with Dow adding that "we're now turning up the heat on this issue".

Removing pre-departure testing in the near future is estimated to add another nine million international arrivals and billions in visitor spending in 2022, Dow told delegates at IPW.

"We are hopeful of a decision in the near future," he said.

## Carnival double up

EXCLUSIVE

CARNIVAL Cruise Line is in the advanced stages of planning for the deployment of a second ship in the Australian market, with President Christine Duffy saying she expects the addition to be deployed for the upcoming 2022/23 season.

Duffy was speaking to *Travel Daily* on the sidelines of the IPW conference in Orlando, Florida today, and without giving specifics hinted that the vessel, likely the new addition to the Carnival fleet formerly sailing as *Costa Magica*, would operate from the newly christened Brisbane International Cruise Terminal.

For more information on this exclusive story, see today's edition of *Cruise Weekly*.



### AIRLINE MARKETING AUSTRALIA Reservations and Ticketing Consultants Full time roles in Sydney

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Applications for this role will close Friday 24th June 2022.

Please note: Only successful applicants will be contacted for an interview.



### Retail Marketing Coordinator

The APT Travel Group are looking for a Retail Marketing Coordinator to join the team.

Working across well-respected and leading travel brands including APT and Travelmarvel, you will help coordinate marketing campaigns with key retailers within the industry.

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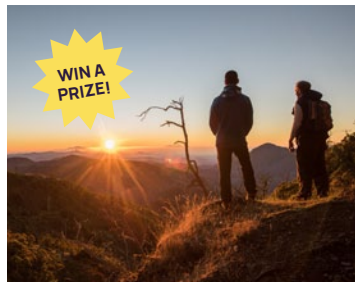
Travel Daily



## Mint correction

**TRAVELLERS** Choice (TC) has appointed Mint Payments as a preferred supplier partner and not its official payment partner, as was previously reported in *Travel Daily* on Mon.

TC also maintains an existing agreement with Zenith Payments.



## TIMOR-LESTE

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## Airbnb faces allegations

**AIRBNB** Inc is the latest digital accommodation platform to be hauled before the courts by the ACCC, with the company accused of misleading consumers into believing prices for Australian stays were in Australian dollars, when they were in actual fact priced in US dollars.

The ACCC alleges that between Jan 2018 and Aug 2021, Airbnb made false or misleading representations to thousands of Australian travellers by displaying prices on its platforms using only a dollar sign "\$", without making it clear that those prices were being charged in US dollars.

While at least on "some occasions", the consumer watchdog concedes Airbnb referred to the price in US dollars in small font on the last page of the booking process, the ACCC said this happened only after the platform had already displayed numerous "\$" amounts on earlier pages, without clearly referencing US currency, and importantly, only after the consumer had clicked to "reserve" their accommodation.

The ACCC also alleges the site engaged in further misleading conduct by telling many complainants that it had clearly displayed prices in US dollars, when this was often not the case.

Adding insult to injury, the ACCC also stated some consumers found themselves further out of pocket through currency conversion fees charged by their

credit card providers.

During the time period of the alleged deceptive behaviour, the average Australian dollar to US dollar exchange rate was \$0.72c, resulting in Australian consumers who thought they were paying \$500 for their accommodation booking paying close to \$700.

"Despite thousands of consumers complaining to Airbnb about the way prices were displayed, Airbnb didn't amend its booking platform until after the ACCC raised the issue," ACCC Chair Gina Cass-Gottlieb claimed.

The ACCC is now seeking injunctions, pecuniary penalties, and orders for the compensation for affected consumers and costs.

The latest case follows Trivago being hit with a \$45 million fine for deceptive behaviour back in Apr (*TD* 22 Apr).

## UA links with BNE

**UNITED** Airlines is set to commence flying three times a week between San Francisco and Brisbane from 28 Oct.

Scheduled for take off from BNE on Tue, Fri and Sun, UA will deploy Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners on the route, with the major US carrier enticed to launch the services via the Qld Gov't's \$200 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund.

The state's Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk said the United Airlines deal would inject \$73 million into the economy.

## FJ hunts for BDM

**BE PART** of Fiji Airways' growing team by becoming the airline's new Business Development Manager based in Victoria.

Applications close at the end of the week, and if you are interested in knowing more about the position, see **page seven** for a full description.



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## Airfares set to increase

**JET** fuel prices have surged to “record levels” which will result in airfares increasing over the coming months, the ACCC’s latest *Airline Competition in Australia* report has warned.

The consumer watchdog’s report stated that the monthly price of jet fuel reached its highest point on record in May 2022, with the margins between jet fuel and Brent crude oil prices widening from \$10 per barrel through most of 2021 to over \$80 by Apr, placing immense pressure on airline ticket prices as a result.

Higher demand for air travel as the sector recovers from the pandemic, the conflict in Ukraine, and refiners in North America and Europe focusing on meeting demand for diesel have conspired to increase the price for jet fuel.

Although the cheapest available discount airfares were at a low for flights in late-Apr, the ACCC observed that Rex’s airfares for post-Easter flights were \$10 higher than its airfares for pre-Easter flights across many of its routes, while Virgin and Qantas

followed Rex by hiking airfares by \$10 in Apr on several routes, including services where both airlines compete with Rex.

Jetstar’s airfares generally remained stable during Apr.

## SYD jobs bonanza!

**THERE** are more than 5,000 job vacancies at Sydney Airport across 800 organisations, including retailers, government agencies, & terminal service providers, with the airport set to host a jobs fair on 16 Jun, on level 3 of the T1 International Terminal.

## Tas piques interest

**THE** Tasmanian Government’s Expressions of Interest for tourism opportunities in national parks is being enhanced to ensure a pathway for private operators to develop tourism attractions across the state.

Changes include reshaping the membership of the Tourism EOI Assessment Panel, and seeking further early-stage advice from Aboriginal organisations.

## Losing out to rivals

**THE** flow of international visitors to Australia continues to be hindered by sluggish visa processing times, the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) has warned this week.

The Council added that the issue had already seen prospective travellers Down Under choose competitor markets as a result of the delay in issuing visas.

“Right now, we need to be doing everything in our power to welcome back international visitors by removing impediments which may encourage visitors to choose an alternative travel destination,” ATEC Managing Director Peter Shelley argued.

Recent survey data compiled by ATEC also showed that the delays in visa processing are already having a “considerable” impact on export tourism businesses.

More than half say visa delays have impacted bookings, while 55% reported trade partners have reduced or stopped selling holidays due to visa challenges.

## VA scraps PHE/DPS

**VIRGIN** Australia has decided to stop servicing the Port Hedland to Bali route due to a “subdued” level of travel demand.

The once-a-week flight, which typically takes just over two hours to complete, was suspended for two years due to international border closures, with sales initially opening up to the public earlier this year.

**Travel Daily**  
on location in  
**Orlando, Florida**

Today’s issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Visit USA and United Airlines from Orlando, where the US Travel Association is hosting IPW2022.

**THE** US travel sector has not been resting on its laurels during the enforced pandemic downtime, with a huge amount of investment undertaken across a variety of destinations in the last two years.

Places like Las Vegas, New York, Los Angeles, Orlando and Chicago have all seen significant capital works projects, such as the new La Guardia Airport in New York; a major transport interchange connecting flights with trains and buses in Orlando, and the huge 18,000 seat MSG Sphere in Las Vegas which will be ready to welcome visitors in time for the city’s inaugural Formula 1 Grand Prix in late 2023.

New hotel developments are under way in cities across the USA, while there’s also been significant development in terms of theme park attractions, new nature-based tours and cultural experiences.

However the thorny issue of inbound testing for vaccinated international travellers remains, with the industry applying heavy pressure to have all restrictions limited.



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## Anguilla cuts portal

**CARIBBEAN** destination

Anguilla has terminated its online entry portal for all travellers, as part of an easing of COVID rules.

However, all people over the age of five will still be required to submit a negative COVID test.

## US fights travel lag

A MAJOR obstacle the US Travel Association is grappling with is the "atrocious" timeline for the US visa application process, which in some countries has blown out to more than 400 days.

"This is totally unacceptable," President Roger Dow said, mirroring the sentiments of many Australians seeking US visas who currently have to travel to either Melbourne or Perth for an in-person interview.

The Association is now lobbying for a range of measures to shorten processing times such as video interviews or automatic renewals for low-risk visa holders.

## Luxury Escapes in the circle



THIS week's IPW travel and tourism trade show in Orlando, Florida saw Luxury Escapes honoured as one of the top 50 global supporters of travel to the USA, in the US Travel Association's annual Chairman's Circle Honors for 2022.

The rarefied list also included

Adventure World, Flight Centre, Dnata, British Airways Holidays and more, with Jodie Collins and Dean McCullagh from Luxury Escapes pictured accepting their award from Visit California President and CEO, Caroline Beteta during a glittering ceremony at Sea World Orlando.

## Passport frustration

DELAYS at the Australian Passport Office have thrown the travel plans for many Australians into disarray.

The hold up has been caused by a massive backlog of applications after two years of border closures, with the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) confirming that processing times have doubled since Oct.

DFAT is now advising applicants to allow at least six weeks to get their passports, however some prospective travellers have already waited eight weeks or more with no confirmation as to when their documents will arrive.

The Department's website says applicants can get their passports within two business days for an extra \$225.

Hundreds of applicants faced a wait of at least six hours in Sydney and up to three hours in Melbourne this week, in lines that snaked around the block of the two offices.



Travel is back and so is Stuba! To celebrate, we're giving you the chance to win one of 25 prizes! All you need to do to be in with a chance of winning great prizes including AirPod Pros, Sonos Roam, Apple Watch 7 and shopping vouchers is make a booking between 23 May and 26 June.

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## Window Seat

**DESTINATIONS** follow user feedback closely, and tourism authorities in the US capital are certainly no exception.

During a comedic presentation at IPW in Orlando yesterday, Destination DC President Elliott Ferguson highlighted some recent one-star Google reviews of the city's attractions.

One aggrieved traveller described The White House simply as "tacky", while another unhappy traveller described the majestic Washington Monument by saying "I couldn't escape the glaring stare of this ugly monstrosity".

A visitor to the spectacular US Botanic Garden gave the arboreal paradise a one-star rating because "I had mosquitoes all over my legs", while someone else complained about the National Zoo because "there are monkeys running loose - and I mean LOOSE".

A complainant noted that the historic Library of Congress did not have any of the Harry Potter books, while the monument-rich National Mall featuring the stately US Capitol Building and the Lincoln Memorial disappointed another traveller because it was "not an actual mall...no real stores, just a bunch of old buildings".

## Own an airline?

**THE** general public will be given the opportunity to make an equity investment in Northern Pacific Airways tomorrow, through a Community Round launched on Wefunder.

With a US\$100 investment entry, the Alaska-based, low-cost airline said the move is less about raising capital, and more about "providing increased investment opportunity for travellers".

**CLICK HERE** for more details.

## Oh yeah! Mario time!



**UNIVERSAL** Studios Hollywood has revealed a detailed look into Super Nintendo World's Signature Ride, 'Mario Kart: Bowser's Challenge', with the immersive land slated to open early 2023.

The ride combines augmented reality (AR) with projection mapping technology and actual set pieces along a moving ride track, to form what the theme park claims is "one of the most complex rides ever built within the entertainment industry".

The journey begins in a dungeon within Bowser's Castle, where guests will put on their AR goggles and hop into stadium-style, four-seat Mario Kart vehicles inspired by the video game (**pictured**), before they steer through courses underwater and in the clouds while collecting coins to defeat Team Bowser and win the Golden Cup.

The ride, which Universal Studios Hollywood describes as a "multi-sensory cornucopia of colour, sound and movement", will keep guests of all ages intrigued and challenged by offering a variety of outcomes.

Super Nintendo World is being constructed within a newly expanded area of Universal Studios Hollywood, in partnership with Nintendo and Universal Creative.

## Rex left frustrated

**REX** has voiced disappointment over the Australian Federation of Air Pilots' (AFAP) request to the Fair Work Commission to hold a ballot on taking Protected Industrial Action.

The move comes after the AFAP rejected the airline's pay rise offer of 5.1% for its SAAB pilots, which Rex says was "substantially better" than the one it accepted from QantasLink in late 2021 (which was 2% in 2021 and 2022).

Rex Deputy Chairman John Sharp said, "the AFAP's double standard clearly demonstrates that it is not really interested in protecting its members' interests but rather in pursuing its own agenda."

## Malaysia hits a mill

**MALAYSIA** has already surpassed the half-way mark of the government's two million international arrivals target for 2022, with the entry of over one million tourists since international borders reopened on 01 Apr.

The country's Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Nancy Shukri said most of the arrivals were from Singapore (around 600,000), with Japan, South Korea and Iran making up the majority of the visitor numbers.

## Princess is back

**PRINCESS** Cruises' *Coral Princess* has made her maiden arrival at the new Brisbane International Cruise Terminal, ahead of next week's first Australian post-pandemic departure for the brand.

She will be the first ever vessel to homeport from the facility, with Princess Senior VP Asia Pacific, UK and Europe, Stuart Allison, saying the season was expected to inject \$60m into the Queensland economy.

More in today's *Cruise Weekly*.

## Saudis on way to Oz

**SAUDI** Arabia has announced plans to send thousands of its young residents to undertake tourism training in Australia, as part of its national tourism strategy to create of one million new jobs in tourism by 2030.

Participants in the program are set to benefit from training scholarships at leading institutions in Australia, as well as nations such as France, Spain, Switzerland and UK, with the trained 'Tourism Trailblazers' to contribute to Saudi Arabia's vision of becoming a major tourism hub.

The push will train 100,000 Saudis during 2022 to meet the staffing needs of the sector, which was only sanctioned for the first time by the Kingdom in 2019.

## BWH joins Alliance

**BWH** Hotel Group has joined the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance (Alliance) to strengthen its commitment to environmental and social responsibility.

The Alliance works with the industry to take collective action on key global challenges affecting people and the planet.

President of International Operations for BWH Hotel Group, Ron Pohl, said, "we are very proud to join the Alliance as an important step in our effort to build a robust, global ESG strategy...[it is] fundamentally the right thing to do."





## Agoda clean deal

**AGODA** has expanded its partnership with tourism authorities to feature 'Clean Certified Accommodations' in more Asia-Pacific countries.

The company will expand the partnership to the Philippines, Korea and Taiwan, as these countries reopen safely and their tourism industries rebound.

Hotels which have fulfilled local standards will also receive a badge on their Agoda page.

## Top End tragedy

**A MAN** has died and six people have been seriously injured after a tour bus crashed in Central Australia this week.

The accident occurred east of Hermannsburg in the Northern Territory on Mon afternoon with 19 tourists on board, when it left the road and rolled several times.

Northern Territory police said they were now investigating what caused the crash, with no conclusions yet reached.

## The Villas are coming...



**A NEW** addition is coming to the Disneyland Hotel in 2023.

A fourth tower is currently being built at the California destination, with the new space to be Disney's 16th location exclusive to Disney Vacation Club guests.

To be known as 'The Villas at the Disneyland Hotel', the tower will feature 12 storeys and 350

guest rooms.

With subtle nods to *Sleeping Beauty* throughout the design of The Villas, there will also be new pool options, as well as additional dining and beverage options for guests to enjoy.

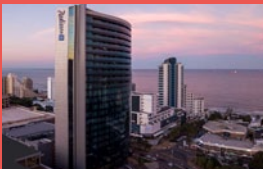
**Pictured:** Disney's 2022-2023 Ambassador, Nataly at the site of The Villas at Disneyland Hotel.

## 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).



**InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort** has introduced the VIP Kids Explorer Experience. Offering fun for kids, the VIP Kids Explorer Experience provides plenty of exciting activities and fun games to the mix, including the chance for children to stay in their own tent. Equipped with a VIP Kids Explorer Passport, the VIP Kids Explorer Experience is part of a series of new offerings to celebrate the resort's 10th anniversary.



**Radisson Hotel Group** has opened its 14th South African hotel in Durban, **Radisson Blu Hotel Durban Umhlanga**. The hotel has easy access to several popular beaches and is within walking distance of the three-kilometre Umhlanga Beach

Promenade. Close to the Durban ICC, the hotel also offers direct access to the luxury Oceans Mall, and is just a five minutes' drive from King Shaka International Airport.



Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts is set to expand its Italian portfolio with the **Hotel Danieli, Venezia, A Four Seasons Hotel**. Following extensive renovations, the property will be reintroduced in 2025.

Located in the Riva degli Schiavoni region of Venice, the hotel consists of three buildings: the 14th century Palazzo Dandolo and two 19th century additions linked by bridges: Palazzo Casa Nuova and Palazzo Danieli Excelsior.

## Chile border update

**CHILE** has revised its COVID-19 action plan, including the management of its borders, Smartraveller has advised.

To enter Chile, travellers must have a valid visa prior to arrival, as well as medical insurance, and also need to have completed an International Travel Affidavit.

It is also recommended (but not mandatory) to take a PCR test.

## Aust Zoo new NFTs

**THE** first collection in the Irwin family's NFT (non-fungible token) project will pay tribute to Steve Irwin, and will consist of a series of digital artworks that can be purchased by the public, centred around the theme of Australia Zoo "Wildlife Warrior" animals.

## The Oscar goes to...

**CONSTRUCTION** will begin later this year on a new luxury hotel called The Oscar at Seppeltsfield's winery in SA's Barossa Valley, after the \$50 million project was granted approval this week.

The slated property (**TD 08 Mar 2021**), which was protested against by locals, is expected to generate an extra \$90 million in tourism spending for the region.

The six-star 12-storey hotel will contain 72 rooms, including suites and penthouses each with a private balcony; a viewing deck on the top level with 360° views of the Barossa; a wellness day spa; an infinity pool; a restaurant and private dining room; and a boardroom.



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Applications close on 12 June, 2022. If you are interested in this opportunity, visit [www.fijiairways.com/our-careers](http://www.fijiairways.com/our-careers). If you have any questions or would like to know more about the role please email [vacancy@fijiairways.com](mailto:vacancy@fijiairways.com).



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