

The pinnacle Kimberley experience

AN AUSTRALIAN FIRST



Photo credit @Ponant Studio – Nathalie Michel, Nick Rains, Paspaley.

In 2023 PONANT together with Paspaley, will deliver an Australian first – the pinnacle Kimberley experience, featuring PONANT’s flagship luxury yacht, *Le Ponant*. Limited to just 32 discerning guests, each sailing also features an exclusive transfer on board one of Paspaley’s *Grumman Mallard* flying boats, providing memorable visual perspectives of the Kimberley. The ultimate Kimberley exploration in barefoot luxury.

DISCOVER



Private transfer flights on Paspaley’s *Grumman Mallard* flying boats



PASPALEY

Phil links with A&K

ABERCROMBIE & Kent (A&K) has announced a new long-term preferred partnership agreement with Phil Hoffmann Travel (PHT).

A&K local Managing Director Deb Fox told *Travel Daily* "we are extremely proud of this new partnership, with PHT being a leading retail brand in the Australian market, an incredible success story of over 30 years in the making."

The partnership was christened on the weekend, with A&K sponsoring PHT's end-of-financial-year celebrations on Sat night.

Air India eyes Oz

AIR India has revealed plans to expand its operations in Australia.

Speaking at Routes Asia 2022, the airline's GM of Commercial, Purnima Nerurkar, confirmed Australia was in its sights as it embarks on a ramping up of capacity to other markets like Europe and South East Asia.

Qantas goes big on SAF

A **SIGNIFICANT** investment will be made by Qantas to expedite the establishment of the aviation fuel (SAF) industry in Australia, via a new landmark agreement signed with Airbus.

The two aviation companies will jointly invest A\$288 million (A\$72 million from Qantas) over five years, a move that Qantas CEO Alan Joyce said would help lower the local aviation sector's reliance on imported fossil fuels, which has seen its price spiral upwards in recent months.

"Without swift action, Australia is at risk of being left behind," Joyce argued.

"This investment will help kickstart a local biofuels industry in Australia and hopefully encourage additional investment from governments and other business and build more momentum for the industry as a whole," he added.

The agreement will see Qantas

invest in locally developed and produced SAF and feedstock initiatives, with designs on lowering its need to source SAF from overseas markets and drive down costs over the longer term.

Projects will have to be commercially viable and meet a strict set of criteria around environmental sustainability.

Qantas has committed to using 10% SAF in its overall fuel mix by 2030 and achieving net zero emissions by 2050, with the latest deal viewed as an important pillar in reaching these objectives.

Joyce added that the deal would also need government support to help SAF production get off the ground and prevent the cost of travel rising in the future.

"We've had some encouraging discussions with the incoming Australian Government given their strong focus on emissions reduction and look forward to that progressing," he said.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news plus a full front page from **Ponant**.

EK home check-in

EMIRATES has added a new First Class experience, with a Home Check-In Service offering travellers the option to check in from the comfort of their own hotel room in Dubai.

The free-of-charge service will see a Check-in Agent visit the passenger at their hotel or home to complete documentation verification, issue boarding passes and take their baggage directly to the airport.

Ponant + Paspaley

PONANT and Paspaley will deliver an Australian first next year - the pinnacle Kimberley experience, featuring *Le Ponant*.

For more information, visit the **cover page**.



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Samoa to court agents

EXCLUSIVE

PLANS are underway by the Samoa Tourism Authority (STA) to mobilise a dedicated sales team to support and grow targeted sales incentive programs in the Australian market.

While the full details of the trade ramp-up are yet to be revealed, STA CEO Tupa'i Robert Ah Sam told *Travel Daily* that Aussie travel agents will "play a very important role" in the country's full recovery from the travel shutdown, as it confirms its ambition to reopen borders to tourists from 01 Aug.

The Pacific Island nation has been furiously preparing for its travel restart, undertaking a series of developments to ensure the destination is safe and ready for arrivals, including the creation of its own contact tracing app, bolstered testing facilities, and improving the training and recruitment of tourism workers.

Ah Sam also hailed recent moves by Qantas to apply for direct services between Sydney

and Brisbane to Apia, confirming intentions to court more carriers if the opportunities arise.

"Currently the national tourism office's goals on air connectivity is to rebuild to pre-COVID levels as quickly as possible while we are continuing to maintain close engagement with current and potential air partners," he said.

Samoa will also continue to pursue an eco-friendly image in its attempt to attract Australian travellers, as well as focusing on "authentic culture and food" in its marketing collateral.

Samoa noted it was expecting the VFR market to be a strong driver of inbound travel this year as Aussies take the opportunity to reunite with loved ones after more than two years of closure.

IATA's new CO2 tool

THE International Air Transport Association (IATA) has launched IATA CO2 Connect, a new tool available to businesses like travel agencies and travel management companies to help calculate CO2 emission for commercial flights.

The organisation said the launch was driven by a demand for CO2 transparency to be linked to airline fuel burn information and load factors, rather than existing theoretical data models.

MEANWHILE, over 1,000 delegates will arrive in Melbourne for the 151st IATA Slot Conference in Nov, delivering a multi-million dollar lift to the state's economy.

Morocco clarification

EXPERIENCE Morocco is represented in Australia by The Unique Tourism Collection, which recently arranged for the group's co-founder Hicham Mhammedi Alaoui to meet up in person with the Australian travel trade.

We incorrectly attributed another local representative in our issue last week (*TD* 14 Jun).

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Gee - it has been a long time



IT WAS a triple anniversary celebration at a recent TravelManagers lunch in Geelong, with three of the agency's fold celebrating milestone work jubilees.

The catch-up offered the chance for suppliers to update PTMs on their latest developments, and also recognised Penny Meallin for 15 years at TravelManagers.

Also celebrated were Sue Callachor and Carolyn Pitt, who have now each completed five years with the company.

The group fittingly celebrated the trio with a three-course meal at Edge Geelong.

Pictured are the TravelManagers crew and supplier partners, hard at work on the ferry to lunch: Evolution Travel Collective's Ingrid Berthelsen, Royal Brunei Airlines' Leah Keenan, TravelManagers' Claire Crosby and Julie Lunn, Norwegian Cruise Line's James McCullagh, TravelManagers'

Maria Rainone and Meallin, Lufthansa's Peter Lombardi, TravelManagers' Lisa King, Evolution Travel Collective's Pete Rawley, TravelManagers' Melanie Carter and Stuba's Rebecca Day.

G20 discusses travel

FEDERAL Health Minister Mark Butler will meet with G20 counterparts today to discuss removing impediments for overseas travellers when it comes to vaccination status.

The Australian Government is keen on all countries creating a standardised system so that Aussies are not bogged down with red tape regarding jabs.

Part of the issue has been countries (or groups of countries) adopting their own technology for digital health verification, resulting in some nations not recognising the Australian COVID-19 Digital Certificate.

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VA's epic WA sale

VIRGIN Australia has launched an epic 'Escape to WA' sale, allowing flyers to "travel west for a whole lot less".

Offering up to 50% off select fares, direct flights to Perth start from as low as \$119.

Members of the carrier's Velocity Frequent Flyer loyalty program will also have the ability to earn five points per dollar spent, as well as status credit.

VA Group Chief Commercial Officer Dave Emerson said Virgin is witnessing demand for leisure travel "growing quickly".

The promotion will run until 11:59pm on 27 Jun.

MEL recovery continues

PASSENGER traffic through Melbourne Airport continued to recover last month, with a total of 367,681 international passengers.

That brought international operations to about 43% of pre-pandemic levels in May 2019 and was a 13% increase on international traffic in Apr.

However, overall traffic numbers actually declined 7% month-on-month after bumper visitation in Apr due to the Grand Prix and the school and Easter holiday period.

MEL's total May passenger numbers were 73% of the figure in May 2019, with CEO Lyell

Strambi saying the international growth was really positive.

"This demand is giving confidence to airlines to increase capacity," he noted, with EK increasing to double daily A380 services alongside expansion of Jetstar flights to Bali and the QF resumption of Melbourne flights to Christchurch and Wellington.

Later this year Melbourne will also host the 151st IATA Slot Conference, with Strambi saying "this will be an opportunity for us to put Melbourne on the global aviation stage and restore international connectivity to our great state."

For the 11 months to 31 May, total international traffic through MEL is already more than six times the figure for 2020/21, while more than 9 million domestic passengers have passed through the airport, a 62% improvement on the previous financial year.



Window Seat

THE new QT Newcastle is recruiting for its quirkiest role yet - the QT Connoisseur.

The hotel is searching for a taste tester and tastemaker for all the luxurious touches and comforts the new addition to the Newcastle accommodation scene has to offer.

If sleeping on the job, eating decadent meals, and throwing theatrical rooftop parties sounds like your idea of a job description, this role is for you!

One of the most important jobs of the QT Connoisseur will be "Chief Tasting Officer" for the newly opened Jana Restaurant & Bar, meaning every seasonal menu on offer from Jun 2022 to Jun 2023 will need to be sampled.

Message QT Newcastle on Instagram to apply.



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TTJ: straight to the pool room



THE Travel Junction (TTJ) was honoured for its support of the American travel sector at the recent IPW 2022 US travel industry trade show in Orlando.

The US Travel Association event showcases the country's top travel buyers in its annual Chairmans Circle Honors, with The Travel Junction named as one of the US industry's top fifty supporting businesses.

The awards ceremony, which also recognised the contribution of Luxury Escapes (**TD** 08 Jun), was held at SeaWorld Orlando and co-hosted by Brand USA.

"The work of our Chairman's Circle honourees is vitally important to bringing visitors

back to the United States and accelerating the recovery of the inbound travel sector," said US Travel Association CEO Roger Dow.

"Their efforts extend well beyond the benefits realised by the US tourism economy and include reuniting Americans with the world and re-establishing cultural ties that we have missed these last two years."

Dow's sentiments were echoed by Brand USA CEO Chris Thompson, who said "consumer confidence is key to recovery, and tour operators and buyers play an incredibly important role in helping increase travellers' ease in exploring new destinations".

Dow and Thompson are **pictured** above with a thrilled James Whiting from The Travel Junction holding the treasured trophy alongside Irene Vecchi, Flight Centre's Global Chains Procurement Leader.

New Portugal W

MARRIOTT Bonvoy has confirmed the debut of its W Hotels brand in Portugal, with the opening of the highly anticipated W Algarve.

The property features 134 guestrooms and 83 residences, with characteristic W features such as an Extreme WOW suite, the WET Deck poolside bar and a large AWAY Spa.

GA restructuring

CREDITORS of Garuda Indonesia have voted in favour of a proposal which will see the carrier restructure more than US\$9 billion in debt.

The move will see investors, plane manufacturers and leasing companies write down a significant proportion of the money they are owed, and exchange the remainder for bonds and equity in the carrier.

GA will now avoid being placed into bankruptcy and be able to execute plans to return to profitability by cutting back on loss-making routes.

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Travel Daily



Centara Vietjet deal

THAILAND hotelier Centara Hotels & Resorts has announced a new partnership with Thai Vietjet, offering customers of the airline a hefty 19% discount on all publicly available online rates.

The deal applies to Centara's 13-strong portfolio across Thailand as well as in the Maldives, Dubai, Vietnam and participating properties in Qatar, Oman and Sri Lanka.

New Cuba tours

A NEW Australian tour company specialising in Cuba will operate its first trip in Aug, with the product developed by Orsolya Bartalis alongside Cuban-based guide Yoanis Blanco Santos.

Having established Simply Cuba Tours at the outset of the pandemic, the pair have managed to keep their vision alive and will offer a range of immersive experiences including specialty tours focusing on a range of topics such as endemic birds, photography and diving.

Groups are limited in size and all accommodation is in hand-picked local homes, with guests directly supporting the Cuban people with their visit - more details at simplycubatours.com.

LGW caps flights

EXTREME staff shortages at London Gatwick Airport have seen the facility's operators apply a strict cap on services, to a maximum of 825 daily in Jul and 850 in Aug - down from the usual 900-odd services which normally operate during the summer peak.

Officials said they were aiming to provide a "more reliable and better standard of service" to travellers, with the move meaning a total of about 4,000 flights will be cut through until Sep.

CEO Stewart Wingate said 400 new staff had been recruited to help process passengers, adding that LGW was "working closely with airlines to avoid disruption to passengers this summer".

Thailand easings

AUTHORITIES in Thailand have confirmed a further easing of COVID-19 restrictions for tourists wanting to enter the country on or after 01 Jul.

Foreign nationals will only be required to show either a Certificate of Vaccination (for fully vaccinated travellers) or a negative PCR or supervised RAT test within 72 hours of departure (for those who are not vaccinated).

Certificates can be either printed or in digital format, with random checks to be made on arrivals at international airports or land border checkpoints.

Capacity continues to ramp up to Thailand, including the resumption of Thai Airways Perth-Bangkok flights from 05 Jul.

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Agents: #byebyeQantas

OPINION

Janene Pendleton is the MD of Helloworld Travel Drummoyne and is among a number of readers who have responded to Ian Mollison's opinion piece on Qantas Head of Distribution Igor Kwiatkowski's reminder about the upcoming commission cuts published last week (TD 16 Jun).

Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to feedback@traveldaily.com.au.

DEAR Igor, thank you for taking the time to remind us of the changes to Qantas commissions and for giving us the opportunity to update you on our business.

We would like to thank our beloved national carrier and industry partner (bahahaha) being the first to lead the way in cutting commissions, this has certainly made it easier for others to follow in expecting free distribution and management of their product – well done you.

The \$2 million a year we ticketed with Qantas was never

an easy sell, because let's face it, you don't fly anywhere and there are many airlines that are better.

Switch selling will be a breeze and we look forward to actively discouraging Qantas as a choice and know clients will thank us for it.

We hope Qantas has used the past 12 months to invest the 4% commission cut in call centres and additional staff OR perhaps some overseas call centres might work for you, or even robots and chat facilities - we all know how Qantas clients love them!

Considering the cut to commission we have implemented a fee for any Qantas Representative/BDM if they would like to visit our stores as they regularly did pre-pandemic - \$110 per 30 mins or part thereof, because more than ever our time is money and no doubt you would understand this decision.

Best wishes to you.
#byebyeQantas

“Switch selling will be a breeze and we look forward to actively discouraging Qantas as a choice.”

Don't waste your time...

OPINION

Also responding to Mollison's missive is this letter from Susan Kerr of Melbourne-based Travel Partners member Susan Kerr Travel.

I AGREE with Ian Mollison, the 5% commission we were being paid was really nothing in comparison to the amount of work we undertook on behalf of our customers.

However as part of a travel package we always take care of our clients' needs.

Now that the commission has dropped further I too am no

longer offering to book and sell Qantas airfares.

Indeed the only option is to charge a small fee to advise on the best itinerary for clients and let them book and pay directly themselves.

That way I am not spending hours fixing any issues anymore, and having clients advise me that they can't rectify themselves online as their reservation states to return to the travel agency that has made no money to sort out any issues.

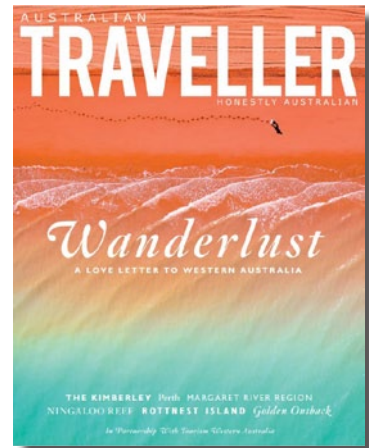
No! No! No!

WA back on the agenda

WESTERN Australia is emerging from the pandemic with a strong approach to attracting both international and domestic visitors, including a new partnership between Tourism WA and the consumer-facing *Australian Traveller* magazine.

The first ever "single-state" edition of the publication (pictured) features 156 pages showcasing WA, with WA Minister for Tourism, Roger Cook saying the State Government was "proud to support this impactful media partnership, which is part of our wider strategy to drive interest in WA from all over Australia, to boost our visitor numbers and inject millions into our economy".

The new issue is available nationally via newsagencies alongside content on a special hub on the *Australian Traveller* website, with the campaign also backed by more than 30 WA industry suppliers including AAT Kings, Crown Hotels, Journey Beyond, G'Day Group, Pan Pacific, True North, RedSands Campers and more.



CX Sabre deal

CATHAY Pacific has announced an enhanced relationship with Sabre Corporation giving agents access to CX NDC content via the Sabre travel marketplace.

Sabre said the agreement gave it "extra traction on its NDC roadmap" while also creating additional modern airline retailing opportunities for the carrier.

CX also uses Sabre's Fares Manager and Fares Optimizer solutions to achieve strategic pricing and intelligent offers.

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How to Apply

Applications close Friday 1 July 2022



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.



Lindblad Expeditions - Explorations 2021-24

There are more than 40 new itineraries featured in Lindblad Expeditions and National Geographic's latest brochure, which encompasses a number of regions, including North America, Antarctica & Patagonia, the Arctic, the Pacific Islands, and more. On the new Antarctica & Patagonia: Legendary Ice & Epic Fjords 18-day itinerary, travellers will navigate Chile's coastal fjords and explore 'Glacier Alley', witness Antarctica's amazing wildlife such as penguins, leopard seals and killer whales, hike in Torres del Paine National Park, and discover private reserves such as Karukinka.

Mercure Haneda

ACCOR has once again extended its footprint in Japan with the signing of Mercure Haneda hotel, which is set to be the first international airport hotel located close by to Tokyo's Haneda Airport.

The 363-room property, which is slated for completion in 2023, will be positioned close to downtown Tokyo, Yokohama, and Otorii Railway Station.

Featuring a 'Tokyo Electric' design concept, the hotel will offer a restaurant, a bar, a fitness centre, three meeting rooms, and lounges for guests and crews.

Taiwan eases

TAIWAN has reduced its quarantine period for all international arrivals to three days (not including the day you arrive), followed by four days of self-monitoring, with an initial cap of 25,000 arrivals per week.

International transits at Taiwan's airports are also allowed now.

BNE and CIM sustainability deal

BRISBANE Airport Corporation (BAC) has announced a new deal with building analytics platform CIM to provide building operations monitoring across its domestic terminal, as part of its ongoing sustainability commitment.

CIM will identify and initiate resolution of inefficiencies in the airport's large plant & equipment such as heating, ventilation & air conditioning systems, to improve operational efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

BAC Building Asset and Maintenance Manager, Kevin Blazely, said "as optimism around travel continues to ramp up, our ability to maintain a smooth operating environment will become increasingly critical.

"Proactively picking up on faults through continuous monitoring will allow us to meet our ambitious sustainability targets... with minimal disruption," he said.

The Metaverse is quickly approaching, but what does that mean for the travel industry? Read all the details in the June issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read

travelBulletin

Travel Squad firing on all fronts



TRAVEL industry start-up The Travel Squad recently celebrated its one-year birthday on-board the superyacht YOT Club with employees, travel suppliers, partners, and special friends.

Managing Director, Melanie Hardie, said "the event is a watershed moment, not only for the business but hopefully an optimistic sign of things to come for the industry, highlighting the resurgence of travel and the key role travel agents now play to guide people as the world navigates its way out of the pandemic."

The Travel Squad's Gold Coast based OTA, Travelfix, works with brands to offer their members customised travel programs.

The agency has experienced strong growth in bookings for 2023/2024 departures, with itineraries like the inaugural Cairo to Lisbon 46-night 2023 Rivers of the World voyage with Uniworld selling out within days.

Pictured: Siergeoh Miranda, Business Partner; Melanie Hardie, Managing Director; Sophie Krauel, Manager Travel Services; Karine Tomlinson, Product Manager; Nicole Newman, Marketing Manager.

Travel Daily
Events

PRESENTS

AN ONLINE EVENT
WITH



Join us for an industry update from Switzerland Tourism's Director Australia & New Zealand, Livio Goetz. Hear all about Switzerland's 'Winter Magic Tour' and listen to what it's really like from someone who has recently completed the tour and have all your questions answered.

TUESDAY 21 JUNE

1.00 PM (AEST)

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