

## MTA charter deal

**ADVISORS** operating under the MTA - Mobile Travel Agents banner can now access real-time pricing and bookings for chartered aircraft under a new deal with Monarc Global.

The agreement sees advisors able to provide an accurate quote within minutes using Monarc's Travech software, saving sellers time by negating the need to compose multiple emails.

"Working with Monarc Global and their Travech software opens up huge opportunities for our advisors," MTA Chief Executive Officer Don Beattie said.

"Our extensive client-base has shown demand for this type of product and with this innovative software we'll now be able to provide a timely service expected by time-poor clients".

Monarc Global helps charter operators, travel services, and airlines automate their pricing and booking systems.

## Cruising is back on baby!

**THE** Australian Government has announced that it will not renew the ban on international cruise ships arriving and departing from Australian ports, paving the way for a formal resumption on 17 Apr (**TD** breaking news).

International cruise ships will still need to meet all state and territory public health requirements of the jurisdiction they wish to service, with each region expected to advise shortly regarding their individual readiness to accept vessels.

Among the conditions handed down by National Cabinet today to ensure a safe resumption in Australia is the mandate for all passengers to be double vaccinated, as well as the implementation of enhanced pre-arrival reporting and identification protocols.

Stress testing of the emergency response systems and a broader engagement with the cruise

industry have also been listed as key resumption measures.

P&O Cruises Australia was quick to flag its return to local cruising at the end of May, with the launch of a new 2022 program of sailings from Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and Melbourne.

*Pacific Explorer* will sail from Sydney on 31 May on a four-night roundtrip cruise to Brisbane, where the ship is scheduled to make the first call at the city's new cruise terminal on 02 Jun.

Meanwhile Federal Minister for Home Affairs Karen Andrews said the reboot of cruising in Australia will be a major driver of the country's economic rebound.

"Before the pandemic, Australia welcomed more than 600,000 cruise ship passengers across the border from almost 350 vessels," Andrews said.

"The cruise ship industry forms part of the government's plan to bolster our economic growth."

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features five pages of news.

## UK cuts red tape

**THE** United Kingdom has scrapped the need for in-bound travellers to fill out a Passenger Locator Form, which was previously used by government authorities to facilitate contact tracing in case travellers are exposed to an infectious disease during their flights.

## Dual names adopted

**TOURISM** Australia has announced it will integrate a dual-naming approach for capital cities and other locations around Australia to accommodate Aboriginal names alongside the English name in its communications collateral.

TA said it was important to acknowledge 60,000 years of Indigenous custodianship.

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Travel Daily's second Survival Survey shows green shoots of recovery, but it is a serpentine road ahead. Read more in the latest *travelBulletin*.



## Qantas overhauls rewards

**QANTAS** has announced an overhaul of its Business Rewards program which will see additional benefits allocated to incentivise companies to return to the skies.

Enhancements for corporate clients include individual rewards being rolled out for team members for the first time, allowing business employees who book through the program to earn points for the business and 250 bonus Qantas Points for themselves on every booking.

The renewed business model also offers larger savings on flights across a greater amount of fare types, up to 30% off the cost of Qantas Club memberships, as well as the need for fewer points to unlock new membership levels and rewards.

The news follows an announcement yesterday that Qantas will reinstate its full First class offering by the end of this month (**TD** breaking news

yesterday).

The carrier provided a preview of new cabin layouts in its flagship Airbus A380 aircraft, which will see the configuration of the jet's top deck dedicated to 70 Business class suites and 60 in Premium Economy, while the lower deck will be comprised of 14 First class seats and a refreshed Economy class cabin.

From 27 Mar, Qantas will also revert to offering exclusive First class lounges again, moving away from a hybrid First/Business deployed during the pandemic.

**MEANWHILE** Qantas has expanded its use of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) to reduce the footprint on its flights from LA and San Francisco to Australia.

The deal with US-based Aemetis will represent close to 20 million litres of SAF each year from 2025, with Qantas calling on more to be done to produce such sustainable fuels locally.

## Scenic showcases

**SCENIC** Luxury Cruises & Tours is inviting travel agents to join the brand at one of its showcase events currently making its way around the country.

While the Sydney event has already taken place late last week, there are still sessions to go in Melbourne (17 Mar & 29 Mar), Canberra (24 Mar), Adelaide (31 Mar), Newcastle (05 Apr), Brisbane (09 May), and Perth (26 May).

Each workshop will cover the cruise line's European river sailings, Mekong River itineraries, and Ocean voyages scheduled between 2022 and 2024.

New clients and future travel credit holders who attend will also receive a bonus showcase voucher offer that can be used when making a booking via an agent within 21 days.

Register to attend **HERE**.

## Ormina bonus night

A **FREE** night in Florence will be offered on all of Ormina Tours' Tuscany bookings which are confirmed and deposited by the end of next month.

The promotion, which offers a free night in the four-star Hotel L'Orologio Florence (or comparable), is being run alongside Ormina's Book with Confidence offer, which requires only a \$150 deposit per person.

The free night must be taken at the start or end of the client's selected tour.

**CLICK HERE** for more details.



## Window Seat

**QANTAS** Airways Chief Executive Officer Alan Joyce at the centre of a wave of fake news, which suggests he was "pied" over his announcement the airline would only be flying vaccinated passengers.

The infamous video of Joyce being attacked with a pie during a speech is being recirculated online, with many falsely attaching the clip to the Qantas CEO's suggestion his passengers will need to be vaccinated.

The incident actually took place five years ago, over Joyce's support for same-sex marriage.

## Princess slashes

**PRINCESS** Cruises has significantly shortened its Australian season in 2022/23.

The line has cancelled the majority of its *Royal Princess* sailings in Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific from Sep 2022 through 04 Mar 2023, while scheduled cruises for *Majestic Princess* in Australia, NZ & the Pacific from 24 Feb 2023 to May 2023, have all been cancelled.

Guests booked on affected voyages will have three options: to transfer to an equivalent cruise, accept a future cruise credit, or accept a refund of all monies paid, with credits to be used on any voyage booked before the end of the year.

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## JR East new trips

**JAPANESE** luxury rail company JR East will launch new services on its exclusive Train-Suite Shiki-shima from Apr.

The Shiki-shima's Overnight Yamanashi service will operate between Apr and May, as well as Oct and Nov, showcasing the Yamanashi & Niigata prefectures.

The latest luxury suites on board offer passengers a five-star lounge, observatory, fine dining cars and deluxe suites.

For more details, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Philippines cuts caps

**THE** Philippines has confirmed it will remove all arrival caps across its airports from 01 Apr.

Visiting travellers will still need to submit a negative lab-based antigen test result taken within 24 hours of departure, be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, and take out travel insurance for COVID treatment with a minimum coverage of \$US35,000.

## The Queen of the Skies flies



**THE** relaunch of the Qantas First Class product (see [page two](#)) saw the carrier's Chief Commercial Officer, Stephanie Tully, showcase the upgraded product to a select group aboard one of the airline's A380s at SYD yesterday.

Tully ([pictured](#)) told *Travel Daily* Qantas had utilised downtime while the superjumbos were in the Californian desert to

reconfigure the planes with 70 updated Business suites and an extended 60-seat hard-shell Premium Economy section, meaning there are no longer any Economy seats on the upper deck.

The new product formally takes to the skies on SYD-LAX on 27 Mar, followed by SYD-SIN-LHR from Jun, Tully said.

## We want you now!

**DESTINATION** Gold Coast has launched a "tourism assault" on interstate travellers, zeroing in on the lucrative single and double income earners with no kids market in Melbourne and Sydney.

Destination Gold Coast CEO Patricia O'Callaghan said its new tactical Press Play marketing push would cut through any remaining reticence from Aussies to book an interstate trip.

"We know that while travel remains high on the agenda for Australians and short lead times continue to be a trend, there is still some hesitancy to book interstate as we re-emerge from COVID-19," she said.

"Press Play is all about creating urgency around travelling now with attractive fares and holiday packages to drive immediate visitation and support our 4,400 tourism businesses as we work hard with our members and partners to rebuild the local visitor economy."



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\*Terms and conditions apply



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## Singapore savings

ACCOR has introduced its "for the love of cuisine, colour and culture" campaign, offering Aussie travellers up to 30% off accommodation at 27 of its hotels and resorts across Singapore.

Deals are applicable at a select number of properties operating under the Raffles, Fairmont, SO/, Sofitel, Swissotel, Grand Mercure, Mercure, Novotel, ibis, ibis Styles, and ibis Budget brands.

The promotion is valid for bookings made until 15 Apr for stays until 31 Jul, while Accor Plus members will also receive an additional 10% discount on top of the colour and culture deal.

For further information on the savings deal, [CLICK HERE](#), and for more details regarding Singapore's Vaccinated Travel Lane requirements, see [HERE](#).

## The science of music

P&O Cruises Australia has teamed up with production company Grayboy Entertainment to road test a new musical called Musicology, a fast-paced, visual spectacle that pays tribute to music throughout the ages and spans rock, pop and jazz.

The plan will be to make the show a mainstay on board P&O's newest ships *Pacific Encounter* and *Pacific Adventure*, which will both be sailing Australian waters later this year.

"We've been waiting for cruising to come back home for so long and we've used the time to develop exciting new entertainment offerings that will surprise and delight fans and those looking to enjoy a cruise holiday," P&O Australia's Head of Entertainment Brett Annable said.

## AFTA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



IT WAS only two months ago the Federal Government was speaking about there being no additional support

required and they have already provided over \$20 billion worth of support to our sector, however now we are seeing political leaders speak about our issues in detail and have a clear understanding of why additional support is needed now and into the future.

AFTA and our members continue with our lobbying with close to 30 meetings with members of parliament speaking about the need for ongoing financial support and the importance of recommencing cruise.

The opening of the borders and the recommencement of cruise are essential steps in ensuring that the Australian travel sector can start this process of recovering to be the economic powerhouse it was pre-pandemic.

We had a critical role in connecting Australia not just in terms of people but our supply chains that are becoming ever

more stretched, given the global challenges we as a community are facing at the moment.

Last night in a town hall with Prime Minister Scott Morrison we again saw our collective efforts bring our issues into the mainstream, with the Prime Minister announcing the new working date for recommencing cruise is 17 Apr.

While this was not reflected in the National Cabinet statement and the states still need to agree to it, the fact that the Prime Minister is talking about it and it is an agenda item at National Cabinet and it is being discussed as part of the normal political discourse, demonstrates how far the Australian travel sector has come in recent times.

While the last two years has been the most painful for all of our members in the wider sector, we will be able to see some positives and growth that we've made within the minds of government as a critical pillar of the economy - not just the portfolio of good times.

Finally I am very much looking forward to joining Bruce Piper and Richard Taylor tomorrow to discuss all things travel, advocacy, international affairs and what the future holds for our sector.

## Keen for cruising

ONE in four Aussie agents have received more than the usual amount of interest from travellers seeking to take a cruise, according to a new Viking study.

Almost 80% preference ocean cruising over river and expedition, while most want to sail locally.

## Tropica Fiji reborn

THE Tropica Island Resort has confirmed it will open its doors from 01 Apr following a more than two-year closure.

A new reservation system has also been introduced, allowing guests to book resort experiences at any time remotely.

Travel Daily Events

PRESENTS AN EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

with publisher Bruce Piper and AFTA CEO Dean Long



Join us as we discuss AFTA's current priorities, including the budget submission, potential changes to the Federation's constitution, supplier commission changes, relationships with State and Federal regulators, NTIA 2022 and much more.

WEDNESDAY MARCH 16TH, 1.30PM AEDT

[REGISTER](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS



Quark Expeditions - Update  
29th March 2022 - 11am and 4pm AEDT

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## Prosecuting Russia

AUSTRALIA has moved to prosecute legal proceedings against Russia on behalf of the victims of the downed Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 in Ukrainian airspace in 2014 (TD 18 Jul 2014).

The decision means both Australia and the Netherlands are now in formal proceedings against the Russian Federation in a bid to obtain compensation for the families of the victims.

Previously, Australia had been pursuing the individuals responsible for the surface-to-air missile attack that brought down the aircraft, however, PM Scott Morrison has confirmed there was "overwhelming evidence" to suggest Russia was directly responsible for the accident.

## A very long Fullerton lunch dinner



YESTERDAY evening the Sydney Fullerton Hotel, in partnership with Preferred Hotels & Resorts and the new Londoner Hotel in London's Leicester Square, hosted some key industry partners for a spectacular meal in the hotel's stunning atrium (pictured).

As well as some of Australia's top travel advisors, attendees included Singapore-based Jonathan Newbury, executive VP Asia Pacific for Preferred Hotels & Resorts, who was on his very first post-pandemic business trip.

Sarah Whitty from The Hotel Collection/Edwardian Hotels also showcased The Londoner, describing it as "the hottest new hotel to open in London"

and noted that the UK is back, with hotel occupancy rates already above 90% as COVID-19 restrictions ease.

Rob Weeden, the recently appointed GM of the Fullerton Hotel Sydney, said there was also optimism in the local market, with mid-week occupancies now in the 60% range, which he said presaged similar growing demand for the wider travel sector over the coming months.

He's pictured below with Sarah Whitty; Carolyn Holmes from Preferred Hotels & Resorts; Carol McLaren from The Fullerton Hotel; Jonathan Newbury; and the Fullerton's Director of Sales & Marketing, Darryl Healey.



## Shape our airport

WESTERN Sydney Airport is planning to dig even deeper to find out what will make the aviation hub the best possible experience for travellers.

The facility is in the process of setting up an expert panel to provide feedback on elements such as desired destinations, dining experiences and retail options inside its terminals.

Western Sydney Airport CEO Simon Hickey added that the panel would also help management eliminate potential pain points associated with older airports, such as offering better baggage collection tech.

## MONEY

WELCOME to Money, TD's Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

**AU\$1 = US\$0.719**

THE Australian dollar has nose-dived by around one cent against the US dollar as American tech stocks fell another 2% overnight on the back of investors bracing for an interest rate rise later this week. The Aussie was also weaker against the Euro overnight.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.719
UK	£0.553
NZ	\$1.066
Euro	€0.657
Japan	¥85.12
Thailand	฿24.07
China	¥4581
South Africa	10.88
Canada	\$0.992
Crude oil	US\$112.67

## Travel Daily Events

### UPCOMING EVENTS

TD Events is the new way to showcase your product or service to the travel industry.

**Wed 16 Mar 2022 1.30pm**  
Executive interview with AFTA CEO Dean Long.  
To register [CLICK HERE](#).

**Tue 29 Mar 2022**  
Quark Expeditions - more details coming soon.

**Thu 07 Apr 2022**  
Abercrombie & Kent - more details coming soon.

**Tue 03 May 2022**  
Silversea Cruises - more details coming soon

To organise an event for your company, enquire at [traveldaily.com.au/events](http://traveldaily.com.au/events)